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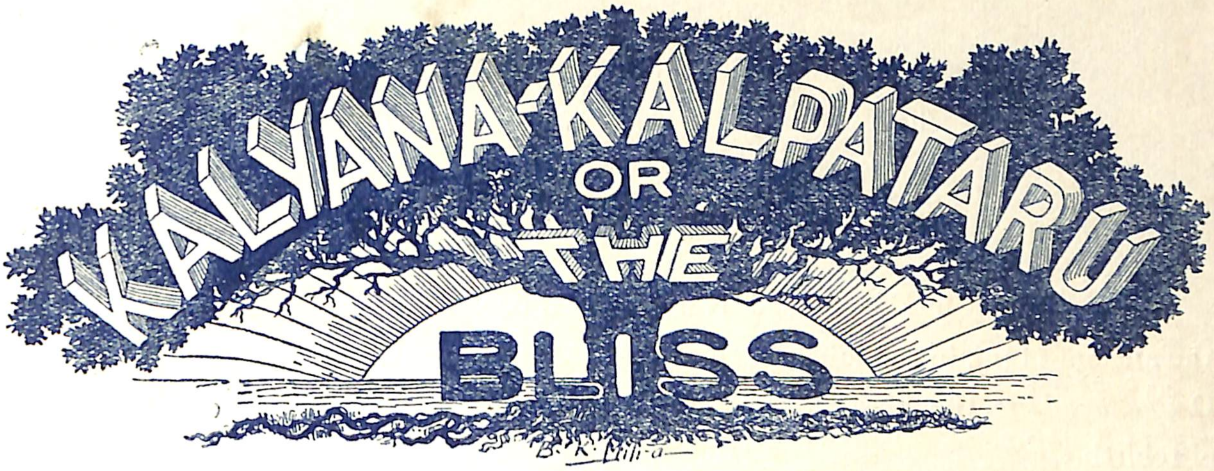
"Shake off this paltry faint-heartedness and stand up."

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

—*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30.*

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मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

(*Gita XVIII. 65*)

"Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me and bow to Me. Verily thou shalt attain Me; I vouch for it, since thou art My beloved friend."

Gita-Dhyana

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्येमहाभारतम् ।
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीमष्टादशाध्यायिनी-
मम्ब त्वामनुसंदधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ।।

ॐ Taught by the Blessed Nārāyaṇa Himself to Arjuna; compiled by Vyāsa, the ancient Muni, in the midst of the *Mahābhārata*. I meditate on thee, O Mother, O *Bhagavadgītā*, the blessed, the pourer-forth of the nectar of *Advaita*, destroyer of rebirth.

नमोऽस्तु ते व्यास विशालबुद्धे फुल्लारविन्दायतपत्रनेत्र ।
येन त्वया भारततैलपूर्णः प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः ।।२।।

Hail to thee, O Vyāsa, large-minded one, with eyes like the petals of the opened lotus; by whom the lamp of knowledge, filled with the oil of the *Mahābhārata*, has been lighted.

प्रपन्नपारिजाताय तोत्रवेत्रैकपाणये ।
ज्ञानमुद्राय कृष्णाय गीतामृतदुहे नमः ।।३।।

To the *Pārijāta* (*Kalpataru*) for the suppliant, to the holder of the whip, to Kṛṣṇa with *Jñana- Mudrā* milker of the Gītā-nectar, all hail !

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ।।४।।

All the Upaniṣads are the cows; the Milker is the Delighter of Nanda; Pārtha is the calf; the man of high intelligence is the enjoyer; the milk is the great nectar of the *Gītā*.

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ।।५।।

I worship the Son of Vasudeva, the God, the destroyer of Kaṃsa and Chāṇūra, the supreme joy of Devakī, Kṛṣṇa, Teacher of the World.

भीष्मद्रोणतटा जयद्रथजला गान्धारनीलोत्पला
शल्यग्राहवती कृपेण वहनी कर्णेन वेलाकुला ।
अश्वत्थामविकर्णघोरमकरा दुर्योधनावर्तिनी
सोत्तीर्णा खलु पाण्डवै रणनदी कैवर्तकः केशवः ॥६॥

With Keśava as helmsman, verily was crossed by the Pāṇḍavas that battle-river, whose banks were Bhīṣma and Droṇa, whose water was Jayadratha, whose blue lotuses were the sons of Gāndhārī, whose crocodile was Śalya, whose current was Kṛpa, whose billows were Karṇa, whose terrible alligators were Aśvatthāmā and Vikarṇa, whose whirpool was Duryodhana.

पाराशर्यवचःसरोजममलं गीतार्थगन्धोत्कटं
नानाख्यानककेसरं हरिकथासम्बोधनाबोधितम् ।
लोके सज्जनषट्पदैरहरहः पेपीयमानं मुदा
भूयाद्भारतपङ्कजं कलिमलप्रध्वंसि नः श्रेयसे ॥७॥

May this Lotus of the *Mahābhārata* be for our good, born in the lake of the words of Pārāśarya, sweet with the fragrance of the meaning of the *Gītā*, pollened with many stories, unfolding to the sun of the *Kathā* of Hari, sucked by the bees of good men in the world day by day, cleanser of the stains of Kali.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् ।
यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्दमाधवम् ॥८॥

I salute Him, Mādhava, the Supreme Bliss, whose grace makes the dumb man eloquent, and the cripple a climber of mountains.

यं ब्रह्मावरुणेन्द्ररुद्रमरुतः स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवै-
र्वेदैः साङ्गपदक्रमोपनिषदैर्गायन्ति यं सामगाः ।
ध्यानावस्थिततद्गतेन मनसा पश्यन्ति यं योगिनो
यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः ॥९॥

Whom Brahmā, Varuṇa, Indra, Rudra, and the Maruts praise with divine songs; whom the Sāma-chanters sing by the Vedas and their Angas, in the *Pada* and *Krama* methods, and by the Upaniṣads; whom Yogīs see by the mind fixed in meditation, to Him going; whose end Suras and Asuras know not; to that God, all hail!

Humanity's Goal according to the Bhagavadgita.

By His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya Maharaj of Puri.

Innumerable volumes dealing with Metaphysics, Psychology and Ethics have dwelt—from millions of years ago and continue to dwell to the present day—on the nature of God, the Individual Human Soul and other such recondite subjects which the untrained human mind worries over and gives up as incapable of solution, but which the trained intellect puts forth its utmost endeavours to tackle and solve. All these writings of great thinkers and philosophers, however, have but confirmed and borne corroborative testimony to the instinctive declarations of our own minds and hearts as regards the Goal of Humanity and the Fundamental Problems of Existence. We, therefore, propose, in the course of this brief article, to call the attention of the readers of the 'Kalyaṇa-Kalpataru' to this aspect of the matter, i. e., from the introspective point of view of self-analysis.

THE FIVEFOLD GOAL

Even a person who has never studied philosophical and other treatises on such questions can—by a simple series of questions addressed to his own heart—ascertain for himself that, notwithstanding differences of details (which only help to confuse the earnest Thinker and Seeker-after-Truth), all the thoughts, words and activities of 'everyone' of us are prompted by and result from the insistent and persistent promptings of our hearts in five clear and well-defined directions; and these are so universal that they need no elaborate exposition. Suffice it, therefore, to merely mention them and describe them as the innate and inherent desire of all of us (1) to go on living for ever; (2) to know all things; (3) to enjoy unbounded happiness without even the least little modicum of sorrow; (4) to be free from all bondage; and (5) to have others acting according to 'our' own views and desires.

ITS LOCATION

A little reflection will suffice to show that none of these five things—which everyone of us (without even a single exception) seeks and strives to attain—is to be found in any human being whomsoever and that *all* of them are attributes of Him whom all the Religions of the world speak of as God. In other words, this simple analysis of our own heart's feelings, desires and aspirations clearly proves to us that even those who do not believe in the existence of God, nay, actually deny His existence, are unconsciously seeking, all the time, to achieve for themselves those very qualities which are the attributes of God as described in all the Scriptures of the world! Eternal Life, Unbounded Knowledge, Boundless and Unadulterated Bliss, Absolute Independence and Absolute Suzerainty over all—these are things which everybody desires. Even little children desire it. It is, therefore, obvious that the sacred text which says:—

नरो नारायणो बुभूषति

(*Man aspires to attain Divinity*),

-expresses an absolutely correct Psychological Truth; and the Truth of this Self-analysis (i. e., the Attainment of Oneness with God is the Goal of Humanity) is borne witness to by our own minds and hearts.

OUR PRESENT PREDICAMENT

The next item for us naturally to take up is the means to be adopted for

reaching our Goal. But, before we can go thereinto, it is necessary that we should know where we are starting from, i. e., what our present predicament exactly is. As a general rule, people labour under the impression that different beings are in different predicaments, because it is a matter of ordinary experience that the poor labourer ekes out even his daily living with the utmost difficulty, while, at the same time, we find kings, millionaires, and even multi-millionaires—who seem to be leading lives of the greatest happiness, ease, luxury and even indolence. But this impression is a superficial one, caused by our thinking of external details and our lack of deep and clear inquiry. If the poor man can get an opportunity to talk matters over with the rich people whom he envies—or otherwise to pry somehow into the recesses of their hearts—he will be astounded to find that the rich equally envy the poor for their happiness (as embodied in their absolute freedom from the thounsands of anxieties, sorrows and apprehensions which are the special lot of the rich). The poor envy the rich; and the rich envy the poor; and all the time all are leading lives of misery in some form or another, in some proportion or another! This is why the Scottish poet Robert Burns clinches the question with the words:—

"The best-laid plans of men and mice
Oft gang agley;"

and repeatedly tells us that

"Man was made to mourn."

The optimist will summarily condemn and dismiss Robert Burns by calling him a pessimist and so on. But none can get over the real point of the poet's meaning, namely, that, however high-placed and comparatively happy in certain respects a particular human being may be, he too has necessarily some measure of sorrow, of suffering and of anxieties as part of his lot; and there is *none* on earth who enjoys undiluted Joy. We may, therefore, summarise the whole position by saying that every Jīva is invariably in *some* sorrow or other and hungers, thirsts and pants for the speedy attainment and the uninterruptible continuance of unadulterated Happiness!

LIGHT ON THE PATH

Having thus ascertained where we now are and what we wish to become, we can now take up the next point and try to find out for ourselves the path which will lead us from where we are to where we wish to go. And, herein, the first thing for us to decide is, from whom shall we get correct knowledge of the right path, whom shall we seek as our adviser, as our guide and as our Charioteer? We may call him a tonga-driver, a coachman or a chaffeur; but, whatever we may call him, we certainly stand in need of one whom we can depend on for showing us the path and taking us onward thereon! Whom shall we learn this from? And who shall take us to our destination? This is the cry that rises plaintively forth from every heart and the correct answer hereto can only come when we realize that it is 'Nārāyaṇa' (God) whom 'Nara' (Man) is seeking and that, Nārāyaṇa being the only one who *knows* that path, He is the only one who can *tell* us anything about it and 'take' us on to our goal, namely, Himself!

It needs no elaborate argumentation to prove that if and when a driver who does not know the path drives a car whose occupants, too, (whom he is driving) do not know the path, the position can only be described in the Upaniṣadic words:—

अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः

(the blind leading the blind and both falling into the ditch)!

GOD HIMSELF OUR GUIDE

Similarly, how can we who seek Peace and Joy at all times, in all places and under all circumstances, hope to learn the Secrets of the Path to Peace and Joy from one who has neither? Surely, he alone can teach us the path

thereto, who has trodden that path and has achieved success thereon ! It is from this standpoint that theologians have always felt and realized the indispensable necessity for and postulated the doctrine of God Himself *incarnating* as Man and becoming Humanity's Teacher and leading it along the right lines to the real Goal. The doctrine of Divine Incarnations is based on this very principle.

THE UNIQUENESS OF SANATANA DHARMA

Analysing the facts of the situation from this angle of vision, everyone must admit that, whereas the Founders of all the other various Religions in the world were—according to their own claims—Prophets and Messengers from God or, at the most (as in Christianity) the *Sons* of God, our Sanātana Dharma has this unique characteristic that it is a Religion established by God Himself and that, too, at the very creation of the Universe. It, therefore, stands to reason, is natural, and is in the fitness of things that the earnest Inquirer and Seeker after the Truth and Light thereon should seek it from the Scriptures of Sanātana Dharma.

AN EPITOME THEREOF

Here, however, we are confronted with the tremendous difficulty that the Scriptures of Sanātana Dharma are a vast, boundless and inexhaustible ocean, for the satisfactory study of even a few fragmentary portions whereof not merely a single life but even thousands of lives cannot suffice. It is, therefore, necessary at the outset that we should take up something which will give us, in a nutshell, the summary of the entire contents of *all* the Sanātanī Scriptures and take us gradually on from the simplest and most elementary *understanding* of the Goal of Life to the final and complete *achievement* of our Purpose in life. And that something should appeal to us, not merely on account of our own historical and sentimental *association* with it but also because of independent and irrefutable evidence coming in favour of it from what should naturally be the most inimical quarter thereto in the world !

THE GITA THE QUINTESSENCE THEREOF.

Even a cursory and superficial acquaintance with the philosophical literature of the Western world including the writings of Goethe, Carlyle, Emerson, Deussen, Professor Mackenzie and other great philosophers of the modern Western world) will help to convince us that the Bhagavadgītā (the word of Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna) is such a text-book. Our own Scriptures describe the Bhagavadgītā as the quintessence of Sanātana Dharma and say:—

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

The Upaniṣads, i. e., the philosophical disquisitions contained in the Vedas are likened to cows; and Srī Kṛṣṇa (who, in his boyhood, actually led the life of a cowherd and was therefore an expert professional milker) is described as the milker of the Upaniṣad-cows. Arjuna—the representative and spokesman of us all (Naras)—the typical Nara, so to speak—was the calf, who first tasted that milk which was milked by the Divine Cowherd for the benefit of Arjuna to start with and for all humanity thereafter, and which is the great Ambrosia (or nectar) which is known as the Bhagavadgītā. Not having been placed before the world in the Kṛta Yuga, the Tretā Yuga and until almost the end of the Dwapara Yuga, the Bhagavadgītā was manifestly and particularly intended for us, the struggling souls of the Kali Yuga.

THE TWO NECTARS CONTRASTED.

The Bhagavadgītā is described as अमृतं महत् (the *Great* Nectar) in order to contra-distinguish it from the petty ambrosia which the gods drink in heaven. Just as money that is paid into a bank and withdrawn from time to time therefrom,

gets depleted and a cheque sent thereafter is dishonoured, exactly so do the enjoyments allotted in the Celestial worlds to the meritorious Souls get depleted by actual enjoyment; and, then,

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं
क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।

(i. e., one has to come back to the earth and take birth again therein). But, by drinking the ambrosia contained in the Lord's own song (the Bhagavadgītā), we reach the Lord Himself; and then there is no coming down or going backward. This is why the Bhagavadgītā is described as the *great* "Amṛta".

NEED FOR A SYNOPSIS.

Let us now try and drink something of this ineffable nectar of the Gītā. It contains such enormous matter condensed, compressed and concentrated within its 700 Slokas, that a thorough study of it from the beginning to end must occupy millions of lives. It is therefore impossible to go into a detailed study thereof in the course of this small article; and yet, at the same time, it is quite possible, by a simple and elementary process, to get into the heart of the *Bhagavadgita*, understand that and thereby fit oneself for such further detailed and elaborate study, understanding and assimilation thereof as, according to one's convenience, one may have further and further opportunities and facilities for.

LIGHT ON THE GOAL

We began by saying, at the very outset, that our Goal was the fivefold one of Eternal Life, Unlimited Knowledge, Unmixed Happiness, Absolute Independence and Absolute Suzerainty over all. These five aspects of Godhood may be still further synthetised and compressed into one, namely, Joy (because the other four aspects may be analysed and dealt with as inherent parts of Joy itself). Now, we may point out that, even before our beginning our study of the 'Contents' of the Gītā, the very *name* Bhagavadgītā gives us a clue to the *Goal* we are after and the exact *location* thereof. In Sanskrit, the word 'Gītā' means song; and, by what, in Sanskrit terminology, we would call 'Ajahallakṣanā' and, in English, as Synecdoche and Metonymy, "Singing" does not indicate the mere act of singing but symbolises JOY. That it is Bhagavān's Gītā (and not Nara's) tells us, in the next place, that the goy which we are after is to be found in Bhagavān Himself and nowhere else.

LIGHT ON THE STARTING-POINT.

We have seen, similarly, that man (however highly, grandly and even luxuriously placed) has always something of misery; and, so long as there is even the least little 'atom' of misery left, one does 'not' realize perfect Joy. This idea, too, is clearly indicated to us by the name of the very first chapter of the Gītā, i. e., 'Arjuna Viṣāda Yoga' (man's weeping). Man thus, being in sorrow, wishes to attain Oneness with God who is the embodiment or perfect Joy.

Having thus found that the Gītā deals with the very subject which our hearts hanker after, namely, the attainment of Eternal and unmixed Joy, and that it also takes into account and starts its story from our exact predicament of misery, let us now seek the aid of the Gītā for Light on the Path which will lead us from this our present predicament of sorrow and suffering to our Goal of Peace and Bliss.

THE RELATIONSHIP

The quintessence of the whole position herein may be summarised by stating that, if we Naras wish to achieve our purpose of becoming Nārāyaṇa, we should do just exactly what the Nara of the Gītā (namely, Arjuna) did in relationship with Nārāyaṇa (namely, Srī Kṛṣṇa) for achieving the selfsame purpose. The relationships between Arjuna and Srī Kṛṣṇa were manifold and multifarious. But, in none of these, are we just now interested. Our sole concern is with that particular relation-

ship which obtained between them at the exact time when Srī Kṛṣṇa gave to Arjuna the teaching of the Gītā. And that relationship was of Arjuna as 'Rathī' (the owner of the chariot) and of Srī Kṛṣṇa as 'Sārathi' (the charioteer or driver thereof)!

DURYODHANA'S REJECTION OF THE LORD.

When both Arjuna and Duryodhana sought Srī Kṛṣṇa's help in the great war of the Mahābhārata, Srī Kṛṣṇa offered to divide Himself in two parts and help each of the applicants with one of them. Srī Kṛṣṇa's arms and armies were all to be on one side; and He Himself, all alone and without arms and armies, was to be on the other side. Being asked to choose between the two, Duryodhana reflected—as most of us are prone to do—in terms of Quantity and in terms or Numbers, not on the basis of Quality and Merit. He therefore decided in favour of the vast armies of Srī Kṛṣṇa and the arms with which they could and would fight against the Pāṇḍavas; and, Arjuna (who was to have the Hobson's choice of accepting for himself whatever was rejected by Duryodhana) congratulated himself that, under Duryodhana's examinership, Srī Kṛṣṇa (the Almighty Lord of the Universe) had failed to pass his examination, and that His arms and armies were preferred by Duryodhana to the Lord Himself.

ARJUNA'S SELF-SURRENDER TO THE LORD

Having thus secured Srī Kṛṣṇa as his charioteer, Arjuna said to Him:—

यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे ।
शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥

"I am Your disciple (and shall obey your orders); I throw myself at Your feet; decide for me what will be for my welfare and *command* me !"

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CHARIOTEER.

He thus not merely made Nārāyaṇa *nominally* his charioteer, but *really* handed over the reins of the chariot into His hands to do (absolutely untrammelled) whatever He liked to do therewith. This alone is true 'Bhakti' and true 'Saraṇāgati'. Let us remember that just as human governments punish the makers and circulators of counterfeit coins, so too does the Government of the Lord with regard to pretended Bhakti and pretended Saraṇāgati.

OUR DUTY

Let us therefore make Srī Kṛṣṇa our Sārathi and leave ourselves in His hands. Being 'Sarvajña' (Omniscient), He knows the path; being 'Sarvaśakti', (Omnipotent), He can drive our chariot thereon; and being 'Paramadayālu' (full of unbounded Grace towards His devotees), He has the necessary frame of mind to exert Himself to do so. He is not merely 'Bhaktavatsala', He is also 'Bhaktaparādhīna'; so much so that it is no exaggeration to say that, while Bhagavān (God) is *great,* the 'Bhakta' (devotee), whose wishes Bhagavān Himself cannot possibly go against, is *greater* still. Such being the case and when such a 'Sarvajña', such a 'Sarvaśakti' and such a 'Bhaktaparādhīna' as the Lord is to be our charioteer, what is there left for us to worry about ? Let us rely on Him even as Draupadī, Prahlāda, Mira Bai and others did before. And let us obey His orders which are before us in the shape of the Scriptures of Sanātana Dharma. For, it will not do for us to call ourselves His devotees with one breath and disobey His orders with the same breath. Let us stick to Him with absolute Faith, intense Devotion and illimitable Love.

THE RESULT

The result of it will be exactly that which Arjuna attained, as described in the last Sloka of the Gītā itself:—

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥

"Where Srī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all Yogas, is the Sārathi and Man is the Rathī, there alone are Prosperity, Success, Plenty and Salvation to be found." But the Arjuna described in this Sloka is not the one who (in Chapters I and II) threw down his bow and arrows and was shedding tears and weeping profusely because he had to fight with Bhīṣma and Droṇa and others, but that Arjuna who is 'Dhanurdhara', i. e., who (in Chapter XVIII) takes up his bow and arrows again, in order to perform his 'Swadharma' (as enjoined by Nārāyaṇa).

THE QUINTESSENCE

Let us give up all our क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यम् (petty faintness of heart) and go forward as Soldiers of God for the performance of the Dharma assigned by Himself to us. Let us remember the Upaniṣadic injunction: नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः (Self-realization is impossible for the weak and the faint-hearted). Let us not think of numbers and let us not act in a mercenary spirit. Let not our hearts ask: "What will it *pay* ?" Rather, let us ask ourselves what *we* shall pay in loving devotion to the Lord. Well, if we do only the things that will pay *us*, we shall have no right to look forward to anything but commercial repayment. Even in Swarga, we shall be paid only what we have *paid in*. But, if on the other hand, whatever we do we do out of Faith, Devotion and Love to Him, He will give out of the inexhaustible magnitude of His love. Even from the profit-standpoint, the result is bound to be beyond all the rosiest and greediest possibilities of human conception ! Let us pay cent per cent, in the shape of Loving and Devoted Service and Obedience to His Commands, to the utmost extent in our power. According to His own law, He will give us cent per cent, according to *His* capacity (which is unlimited and illimitable). In other words, He will give us that oneness with Himself which, at the commencement of this article, we described as the fivefold Goal of Life. And what more can anyone need !

Gita. The Home of all religions.

Gītā is a celestial garden of the trees of discrimination. It is the main stay of all happiness, the fountain of all high principles. It is a vast ocean of nectar. It is the highest abode open to all. It is the chief support and original home of all knowledge, all Vidyas. It is the receptacle of all scriptures. It is the home of all religions, a loving and abiding friend to all alike. It is a store of gems of the beauty of Saraswati...... It is the Ganges of the nectar of Knowledge; it is a new Lakṣmī sprung from the Ocean of milk in form of discrimination. —*Mahatma Jnaneshwar Maharaj.*

The Core of the Gita's Meaning.

By Srī Aurobindo.

What is the message of the Gītā and what its working value, its spiritual utility to the human mind of the present day after the long ages that have elapsed since it was written and the great subsequent transformations of thought and experience? The human mind moves always forward, alters its viewpoint and enlarges its thought substance, and the effect of these changes is to render past systems of thinking obsolete or, when they are preserved, to extend, to modify and subtly or visibly to alter their value. The vitality of an ancient doctrine consists in the extent to which it naturally lends itself to such a treatment; for that means that whatever may have been the limitations or the obsolescences of the form of its thought, the truth of substance, the truth of living vision and experience on which its system was built is still sound and retains a permanent validity and significance. The Gītā is a book that has worn extraordinarily well and it is almost as fresh and still in its real substance quite as new, because always renewable in experience, as when it first appeared in or was written into the frame of the 'Mahābhārata'. It is still received in India as one of the great bodies of doctrine that most authoritatively govern religious thinking and its teaching acknowledged as of the highest value if not wholly accepted by almost all shades of religious belief and opinion. Its influence is not merely philosophic or academic but immediate and living, an influence both for thought and action, and its ideas are actually at work as a powerful shaping factor in the revival and renewal of a nation and a culture. It has even been said recently by a great voice that all we need of spiritual truth for the spiritual life is to be found in the Gītā. It would be to encourage the superstition of the book to take too literally that utterance. The truth of the spirit is infinite and cannot be circumscribed in that manner. Still it may be said that most of the main clues are there and that after all the later developments of spiritual experience and discovery we can still return to it for a large inspiration and guidance. Outside India too it is universally acknowledged as one of the world's great scriptures, although in Europe its thought is better understood than its secret of spiritual practice. What is it then that gives this vitality to the thought and the truth of the Gītā?

The central interest of the Gītā's philosophy and 'Yoga' is its attempt, the idea with which it sets out, continues and closes, to reconcile and even effect a kind of unity between the inner spiritual truth in its most absolute and integral realization and outer actualities of man's life and action. A compromise between the two is common enough, but that can never be a final and satisfactory solution. An ethical rendering of spirituality is also common and has its value as a law of conduct; but that is a mental solution which does not amount to a complete practical reconciliation of the whole truth of spirit with the whole truth of life and it raises as many problems as it solves. One of these is indeed the starting-point of the Gītā; it sets out with an ethical problem raised by a conflict in which we have on one side the Dharma of the man of action, a prince and warrior and leader of men, the protagonist of a great crisis, of a struggle on the physical plane, the plane of actual life, between the powers of right and justice and the powers of wrong and injustice, the demand of the destiny of the race upon him that he shall resist and give battle and establish even though through a terrible physical struggle and a giant slaughter a new era and reign of truth and right and justice, and on the other side the ethical sense which condemns the means and the

action as a sin, recoils from the price of individual suffering and social strife, unsettling and disturbance and regards abstention from violence and battle as the only way and the one right moral attitude. A spiritualised ethics insists on Ahiṃsā, on non-injuring and non-killing as the highest law of spiritual conduct. The battle, if it is to be fought out at all, must be fought on the spiritual plane and by some kind of non-resistance, or refusal of participation or only by soul resistance, and if this does not succeed on the external plane, if the force of injustice conquers, the individual will still have preserved his virtue and vindicated by his example the highest ideal. On the other hand a more insistent extreme of the inner spiritual direction, passing beyond this struggle between social duty and an absolutist ethical ideal, is apt to take the ascetic turn and to point away from life and all its aims and standards of action towards another and celestial or supra-cosmic state in which alone beyond the perplexed vanity and illusion of man's birth and life and death there can be a pure spiritual existence. The Gītā rejects none of these things in their place,—for it insists on the performance of the social duty, the following of the Dharma for the man who has to take his share in the common action, accepts Ahiṃsā as part of the highest spiritual-ethical ideal and recognizes the ascetic renunciation as a way of spiritual salvation. And yet it goes boldly beyond all these conflicting positions; greatly daring, it justifies all life to the spirit as a significant manifestation of the one Divine Being and asserts the compatibility of a complete human action and a complete spiritual life lived in union with the Infinite, consonant with the highest Self, expressive of the perfect Godhead.

All the problems of human life arise from the complexity of our existence, the obscurity of its essential principle and the secrecy of the inmost power that makes out its determinations and governs its purpose and its processes. If our existence were of one piece, solely material-vital or solely mental or solely spiritual, or even if the others were entirely or mainly involved in one of these or were quite latent in our subconscient or our superconscient parts, there would be nothing to perplex us; the material and vital law would be imperative or the mental would be clear to its own pure and unobstructed principle or the spiritual self-existent and self-sufficient to spirit. The animals are aware of no problems; a mental god in a world of pure mentality would admit none or would solve them all by the purity of a mental rule or the satisfaction of a rational harmony; a pure spirit would be above them and self-content in the infinite. But the existence of man is triple web, a thing mysteriously physical-vital, mental and spiritual at once, and he knows not what are the true relations of these things, which the real reality of his life and his nature, whither the attraction of his destiny and where the sphere of his perfection.

Matter and life are his actual basis, the thing from which he starts and on which he stands and whose requirement and law he has to satisfy if he would exist at all on earth and in the body. The material and vital law is a rule of survival, of struggle, of desire and possession, of self-assertion and the satisfaction of the body, the life and the ego. All the intellectual reasoning in the world, all the ethical idealism and spiritual absolutism of which the higher faculties of man are capable cannot abolish the reality and claim of our vital and material base or prevent the race from following under the imperative compulsion of Nature its aims and the satisfaction of its necessities or from making its important problems a great and legitimate part of human destiny and human interest and endeavour. And the intelligence of man even, failing to find any sustenance in spiritual or ideal solutions that solve everything else but the pressing problems of our actual human life, often turns away from them to an exclusive acceptance of the vital and material existence and the reasoned or instinctive pursuit of its

utmost possible efficiency, well-being and organised satisfaction. A gospel of the will to live or the will to power of a rationalised vital and material perfection becomes the recognized Dharma of the human race and all else is considered either a pretentious falsity or quite subsidary thing, a side issue of a minor and dependent consequence.

Matter and life however in spite of their insistence and great importance are not all that man is, nor can he wholly accept mind as nothing but a servant of the life and body admitted to certain pure enjoyments of its own as a sort of reward for its service or regard it as no more than an extension and flower of the vital urge, an ideal luxury contingent upon the satisfaction of the material life. The mind much more intimately than the body and the life is the man, and the mind as it develops insists more and more on making the body and the life an instrument—an in dispensable instrument and yet a considerable obstacle, otherwise there would be no problem—for its own characteristic satisfactions and self-realization. The mind of man is not only a vital and physical, but an intellectual, æsthetic, ethical, psychic, emotional and dynamic intelligence, and in the sphere of each of its tendencies its highest and strongest nature is to strain towards some absolute of them which the frame of life will not allow it to capture wholly and embody and make here entirely real. The mental absolute of our aspiration remains as a partly grasped shining or fiery ideal which the mind can make inwardly very present to itself, inwardly imperative on its effort, and can even effectuate partly, but not compel all the facts of life into its image. There is thus an absolute, a high imperative of intellectual truth and reason sought for by our intellectual being; there is an absolute, an imperative of right and conduct aimed at by the ethical conscience; there is an absolute, an imperative of love, sympathy, compassion, oneness yearned after by our emotional and psychic nature; there is an absolute, an imperative of delight and beauty quivered to by the æsthetic soul; there is an absolute, an imperative of inner self-mastery and control of life laboured after by the dynamic will; all these are there together and impinge upon the absolute, the imperative of possession and pleasure and safe embodied existence insisted on by the vital and physical mind. And the human intelligence, since it is not able to realize entirely any of these things, much less all of them together, erects in each sphere many standards and Dharmas, standards of truth and reason, of right and conduct, of delight and beauty, of love, sympathy and oneness, of self-mastery and control, of self-preservation and possession and vital efficiency and pleasure, and tries to impose them on life. The absolute shining ideals stand far above and beyond our capacity and rare individuals approximate to them as best they can: the mass follow or profess to follow some less magnificent norm, some established possible and relative standard. Human life as a whole undergoes the attraction and yet rejects the ideal. Life resists in the strength of some obscure infinite of its own and wears down or breaks down any established mental and moral order. And this must be either because the two are quite different and disparate though meeting and interacting principles or because mind has not the clue to the whole reality of life. The clue must be sought in something greater, an unknown something above the mentality and morality of the human creature.

The mind itself has the vague sense of some surpassing factor of this kind and in the pursuit of its absolutes frequently strikes against it. It glimpses a state, a power, a presence that is near and within and inmost to it and yet immeasurably greater and singularly distant and above it; it has a vision of something more essential, more absolute than its own absolutes, intimate, infinite, one, and it is that which we call God, Self or Spirit. This then the mind attempts to know, enter, touch and seize wholly, to approach it or become it, to arrive at some kind of unity or lose itself in a complete identity with that mystery, 'Aścharyam'.

The difficulty is that this spirit in its purity seems something yet farther than the mental absolutes from the actualities of life, something not translatable by mind into its own terms, much less into those of life and action. Therefore we have the intransigeant absolutists of the spirit who reject the mental and condemn the material being and yearn after a pure spiritual existence happily purchased by the dissolution of all that we are in life and mind, a Nirvāṇa. The rest of spiritual effort is for these fanatics of the Absolute a mental preparation or a compromise, a spiritualising of life and mind as much as possible. And because the difficulty most constantly insistent on man's mentality in practice is that presented by the claims of his vital being, by life and conduct and action, the direction taken by this preparatory endeavour consists mainly in a spiritualising of the ethical supported by the psychical mind—or rather it brings in the spiritual power and purity to aid these in enforcing their absolute claim and to impart a greater authority than life allows to the ethical ideal of right and truth of conduct or the psychic ideal of love and sympathy and oneness. These things are helped to some highest expression, given their broadest luminous basis by an assent of the reason and will to the underlying truth of the absolute oneness of the spirit and therefore the essential oneness of all living creatures. This kind of spirituality linked on in some way to the demands of the normal mind of man, persuaded to the acceptance of useful social duty and current law of social conduct, popularised by cult and ceremony and image is the outward substance of the world's greater religions. These religions have their individual victories, call in some ray of a higher light, impose some shadow of a larger spiritual or semi-spiritual rule, but cannot effect a complete victory, end flatly in a compromise and in the act of compromise are defeated by life. Its problems remain and even recur in their fiercest forms—even such as this grim problem of Kurukṣetra. The idealising intellect and ethical mind hope always to eliminate them, to discover some happy device born of their own aspiration and made effective by their own imperative insistence, which will annihilate this nether untoward aspect of life; but it endures and is not eliminated. The spiritualised intelligence on the other hand offers indeed by the voice of religion the promise of some victorious millennium hereafter, but meanwhile half convinced of terrestrial impotence, persuaded that the soul is a stranger and intruder upon earth, declares that after all not here in the life of the body or in the collective life of mortal man but in some immortal Beyond lies the heaven or the Nirvāṇa where alone is to be found the true spiritual existence.

It is here that the Gītā intervenes with a restatement of the truth of the Spirit, of the Self, of God and of the world and Nature. It extends and remoulds the truth evolved by a later thought from the ancient Upaniṣads and ventures with assured steps on an endeavour to apply its solving power to the problem of life and action. The solution offered by the Gītā does not disentangle all the problem as it offers itself to modern mankind; as stated here to a more ancient mentality, it does not meet the insistent pressure of the present mind of man for a collective advance, does not respond to its cry for a collective life that will at last embody a greater rational and ethical and if possible even a dynamic spiritual ideal. Its call is to the individual who has become capable of a complete spiritual existence; but for the rest of the race it prescribes only a gradual advance, to be wisely effected by following out faithfully with more and more of intelligence and moral purpose and with a final turn to spirituality the law of their nature. Its message touches the other smaller solutions but, even when it accepts them partly, it is to point them beyond themselves to a higher and more integral secret into which as yet only the few individuals have shown themselves fit to enter.

The Gītā's message to the mind that follows after the vital and material life is that all life is indeed a manifestation

of the universal power in the individual, a derivation from the Self, a ray from the Divine, but actually it figures the Self and the Divine veiled in a disguising Māyā, and to pursue the lower life for its own sake is to persist in a stumbling path and to enthrone our nature's obscure ignorance and not at all to find the true truth and complete law of existence. A gospel of the will to live, the will to power, of the satisfaction of desire, of the glorification of mere force and strength, of the worship of the ego and its vehement acquisitive self-will and tireless self-regarding intellect is the gospel of the Asura and it can lead only to some gigantic ruin and perdition. The vital and material man must accept for his government a religious and social and ideal Dharma by which, while satisfying desire and interest under right restriction, he can train and subdue his lower personality and scrupulously attune it to a higher law both of the personal and the communal life.

The Gītā's message to the mind occupied with the pursuit of intellectual, ethical and social standards, the mind that insists on salvation by the observance of established Dharmas, the moral law, social duty and function or the solutions of the liberated intelligence, is that this is indeed a very necessary stage, the Dharma has indeed to be observed and, rightly observed, can raise the stature of the spirit and prepare and serve the spiritual life, but still it is not the complete and last truth of existence. The soul of man has to go beyond to some more absolute Dharma of man's spiritual immortal nature. And this can only be done if we repress and get rid of the ignorant formulations of the lower mental elements and the falsehood of egoistic personality, impersonalise the action of the intelligence and will, live in the identity of the one self in all, break out of all ego-moulds into the impersonal spirit. The mind moves under the limiting compulsion of the triple lower nature, it erects its standards in obedience to the Tāmasic, Rājasic or at highest the Sāttvic qualities; but the destiny of the soul is a divine perfection and liberation and that can only be based in the freedom of our highest self, can only be found by passing through its vast impersonality and universality beyond mind into the integral light of the immeasurable Godhead and supreme Infinite who is beyond all Dharmas.

The Gita's message to those, absolutist seekers of the Infinite, who carry impersonality to an exclusive extreme, entertain an intolerant passion for the extinction of life and action and would have as the one ultimate aim and ideal an endeavour to cease from all individual being in the pure silence of the ineffable Spirit, is that this is indeed one path of journey and entry into the Infinite, but most difficult, the ideal of inaction a dangerous thing to hold up by precept or example before the world, this way, though great, yet not the best way for man and this knowledge, though true, yet not the integral knowledge. The Supreme, the all-conscious Self, the Godhead, the Infinite is not solely a spiritual existence remote and ineffable; he is here in the universe at once hidden and expressed through man and the gods and through all beings and in all that is. And it is by finding him not only in some immutable silence but in the world and its beings and in all self and in all Nature, it is by raising to an integral as well as to a highest union with him all the activities of the intelligence, the heart, the will, the life that man can solve at once his inner riddle of Self and God and the outer problem of his active human existence. Made Godlike, God-becoming, he can enjoy the infinite breadth of a supreme spiritual consciousness that is reached through works no less than through love and knowledge. Immortal and free, he can continue his human action from that highest level and transmute it into a supreme and all-embracing divine activity,—that indeed is the ultimate crown and significance here of all works and living and sacrifice and the world's endeavour.

This highest message is first for those who have the strength to follow after

it, the master men, the great spirits, the God-knowers, God-doers, God-lovers who can live in God and for God and do their work joyfully for Him in the world, a divine work uplifted above the restless darkness of the human mind and the false limitations of the ego. At the same time, and here we get the gleam of a larger promise which we may even extend to the hope of a collective turn towards perfection,—for if there is hope for man, why should there not be hope for mankind?—the Gītā declares that all can if they will, even to the lowest and sinfullest among men, enter into the path of this 'Yoga'. And if there is a true self-surrender and an absolute unegoistic faith in the indwelling Divinity, success is certain in this path. The decisive turn is needed; there must be an abiding belief in the Spirit, a sincere and insistent will to live in the Divine, to be in self one with him and in Nature—where too we are an eternal portion of his being—one with his greater spiritual Nature, God-possessed in all our members and Godlike.*

A Compendium of the Gita.

By A. B. Dhruva, M. A, L L. B.

(1)

The very first question that presents itself to a student of the Gītā is, who is eligible for receiving instruction in the 'Gītā' ? An answer to this question will be found in the very beginning of the book. He alone who, though lacking a clear conception of his duty, is prepared to sacrifice victory, kingdom, amenities of life, all sorts of worldly enjoyments, nay, his very life for the sake of others' happiness is qualified for being initiated in the 'Gītā'. The following verse of Chapter I supplies the key to this answer:-

न कांक्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च।
किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥

(I. 32)

"I covet not victory, O Kṛṣṇa, nor kingdom, nor pleasures; what do we care for kingdom, O Govinda, or for enjoyments or even for life ?"

(2)

Immortality of the soul is the basis of all morality and religion. If the spirit is regarded as a mere transformation of matter, our notions of morality will have no permanent value and lose their very significance. Hence the Lord makes the following lines the nucleus of His highly profound teaching:—

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्-
नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

(II. 20)

"He is not born, nor doth he die; nor doth it spring up into existence (like something having a beginning in time); unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient, he is not slain when the body is slaughtered."

(3)

If the soul is perpetual and eternal, what is to be understood of changes such as death, etc., that appear to us as occurring in the Soul ? Our reply to this question is, that whatever is happening in the world is a game of 'Prakṛti' consisting of the three Guṇas. The soul is above this 'Prakṛti' and unattached to it.

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥

(III. 28)

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* Reproduced from the "Essays on the Gita" with the author's kind permission.

"But he, O mighty-armed one, who knoweth in reality the distinction between the Guṇas and their actions, holding that "the qualities move among qualities", i. e., the senses move amid their respective objects, is not attached."

(4)

Does it mean that we should abstain from all forms of activity and remain idle and motionless like a lifeless object ? Or should we indiscriminately indulge in all sorts of activities including sinful acts, taking every movement to be a play of 'Prakṛti' ? Our answer to this question is, that we should avoid both these extremes. For, (1) the soul is no doubt higher than 'Prakṛti', but not separate from it. In other words, it lies beyond 'Prakṛti' even though dwelling in it. This constitutes the main difference between the Sāṃkhya and Vedānta systems. This distinction is of great importance from the point of view of morality. (2) 'Prakṛti' should be merged in the Spirit; the latter should not be steeped in the mire of 'Prakṛti'. In other words, we should bring out the divinity of the soul in and through 'Prakṛti' and should not allow the vices of 'Prakṛti' to contaminate the soul. An enlightened soul therefore conducts himself in the world according to the following maxim:-

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ।।

(IV. 24)

"The ladle is 'Brahma' as also the oblation; even so is the act of offering the oblation into the fire, which again is 'Brahma', by the sacrificer who is himself Brahma. Surely, the goal to be reached by him who is absorbed in the act as 'Brahma' is also 'Brahma."

(5)

If, then, we perform sacrifices, etc. with a consciousness of the existence of 'Brahma' as something remote from us, will it be enough ? No. 'Brahma' is not only remote from us, It is both remote and near. It is beyond all visible objects, and is yet present in them. One who conceives God to be a personality dwelling high in heaven may go amiss in his worldly dealings but the life of one who sees God even in his worldy transactions must be very noble indeed. Hence the 'Gītā' says:—

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ।।

(V. 18)

"The wise look with the same eye on a Brahman (one belonging to the priestly class) adorned with learning and culture, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a pariah."

(6)

Now the question is, how to cultivate this equality of vision ? There are so many disparities in this world that it does not appear ordinarily possible to look upon everything with the same eye. This is, however, not the case. It will not avail us to bury or forget the differences. What we should do is to merge them in equality—in unity. In other words, we should learn to perceive unity in diversity. The way to do it has been pointed out by the Lord in the following verse:—

शनैः शनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ।।

(VI. 25)

"Let him gradually acquire an attitude of indifference towards the world by means of Reason controlled by steadfastness; having established the mind in the Self, let him not think of anything."

(7)

"Let him not think of anything", says the above verse. Here it may be asked: Is the Vedanta Philosophy intended to make us dull and stupid ? Our answer to this is that the above verse asks us not to think of anything else than God. That is

to say, we should see God in everything, confine our thoughts to God alone, get absorbed in Him, nay, turn our very thoughts into Brahma. Having controlled the vagaries of our mind, let us turn it Godward, establish it in the Self. The question which now presents itself to us is: How can the Self be made the object of our thoughts? Our reply to this is, that in reality the Self cannot be made the object of our thoughts; for the thoughts themselves emanate from the Self. But consciousness appears so marvellous in nature that it can be subjective and objective both. Such being the case, the thoughts embrace God, becoming divine themselves. Just as a wave of the ocean dashes against another and becomes one with it, even so they embrace God and become divine themselves.

Hence the following verse of the Gītā gives us a conception or description of God worthy of being meditated upon:—

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥

(VII. 4)

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, Mind, Intelligence and Egoism—these constitute My eightfold nature."

(8)

The next question is, how to visualize God in this eightfold nature? The method is as follows. Recite the sacred syllable Aum, which consists of the letters A, U and M, an 'Ardhamātrā' (half syllable) and a dot (which symbolise Personal God, who is responsible for the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe and who unites the Unqualified Brahma with the attribute of causation; 'Māyā', which, though herself integral and intact, is endowed with limiting power (मात्रा); and the Ineffable Supreme Reality or Parabrahma respectively)—not simply like a parrot without understanding its meaning, but with an idea of its meaning. To quote the words of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, "He who remembers Me while repeating the above syllable and leading a righteous life and does the same thing even while, leaving this body, he attains Me, the highest goal." This is what is sought to be conveyed by the following verse:—

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥

(VIII. 13)

(9)

How is one who is thus engaged day and night in reciting the names of God and remembering Him, to pull on in this world. Such a question can be asked by base worldlings only. One who has ever had a vision of God can never worry about worldly matters. Did the celebrated Gopīs ever think of their household duties? Their domestic affairs never remained unattended to; for their beloved Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself took care of them. The Blessed Lord personally attends to the requirements of His devotees. Of him who thinks exclusively of God, adores Him in every way, is absorbed in Him for very love and feels his identity with Him, the Gītā says:—

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

(IX. 22)

"To those men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever united with Me I bring full security and attend to their needs."

(10)

It has been said before that we should worship, remember, and meditate upon God as manifested in the eightfold nature referred to above. But this brings God to the level of Nature and makes Him finite. Our reply in this connection is that God should not be regarded as reduced to the position of nature. Nature is a manifestation of God and a wise man

sees God reflected therein. In other words, he does not behold nature as Nature but as God. Just as ice is not something different from water or a wave with the ocean or the sky confined in a jar from the open sky, even so is Matter or Nature not different from God. Now the question is: If Nature is not different from God, how can it circumscribe God? The answer to this question is, that although Nature is not different from God, one should not be led to think that it is co-extensive with God. Nature is only a manifestation of one fragment of His whole being. The rest of His being transcends Nature and cannot be described in words except in negative terms such as 'नेति, नेति' ('not that, not that'). But the whole of His being is not beyond Nature; some of it is covered by or extends over nature, while the rest of it lies beyond 'Prakṛti'. This is indicated in the following verse of Srīmad Bhagavadgītā:—

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥

(X, 42)

"Of what avail is the knowledge of all these details to thee, O Arjuna? Suffice it to say that I hold this entire universe in one fragment of Mine."

(11)

How does a vision of the bright lustre of Divine glory affect different creatures, is described in the following verse. Some are transported with joy, others are driven into raptures of love, whereas the demons flee away in terror and the Siddhas bow to Him in reverence. In other words, the wise are transported with joy, the devotees are filled with ecstatic love, the evil-minded flee in terror, while accomplished Yogīs bow to Him in deep admiration of His glory.

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या
जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति
सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसंघाः ॥

(XI. 36)

(12)

The mental condition of one who has become a devotee of God is depicted in the following couplet. A devotee of God wants nothing. This does not mean that he abstains from the use of all useable things. He does not give up anything without any rhyme or reason and glory over the fact. He is free from such duality. He alone who recognizes 'Māyā' to be something different from 'Brahma' (God) deems it necessary to flee from it. A monist, however, seeks to visualize God even in 'Māyā'. He washes his body with pure water, purifies his tongue by means of sweet and agreeable words, and his mind by means of noble thoughts. That is to say, he is pure in mind, speech and body, and thus fit for worshipping God. He is not only pure in every way but also clever and wise. Like an enlightened soul he is indifferent to all external circumstances, i. e., free from likes and dislikes and is altogether immune from pain and afflictions to which ordinary beings are liable. The secret of his enjoying such an enviable position is that he has thoroughly dedicated all his undertakings and activities to God. Such a devotee is supremely dear to the Lord. This is what the following verse conveys:—

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्षः उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥

(XII. 16)

(13)

Now the question is: How can one who is engaged in all sorts of activities be called 'indifferent'? This will be clear from the following illustration. Just as ether penetrates every inch of space by reason of its subtlety and is not contaminated by anything, even so is the soul not affected even though dwelling in every part of the body. In other words, it is not necessary for the soul to leave this tabernacle in order to remain unpolluted and unaffected by external surroundings. It is unaffected even though existing in the body and transacting worldly business.

The soul does not exist in the body or the world like a diamond kept in a casket. The analogy of a diamond holds good in this case only in this respect that just as the diamond is not affected in the least by the dirtiness of the casket, similarly, the Self is not affected by the modifications of the body or by the nature of its activities. The soul, on the contrary, sustains the body and keeps its activities going on; nay, it is the Inner Controller of all, the one indivisible unifying principle underlying their numberless varieties.

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥

(XIII. 32)

(14)

One who has visualized or realized as his own self the Spirit described in the above verse as dwelling in Nature as well as transcending it, does not have any attachment with that Nature, consisting of the three Guṇas. Illumination (which is a property of 'Sattvaguṇa'), Activity (which is a characteristic of 'Rajoguṇa'), and infatuation (which is a distinctive feature of 'Tamoguṇa') may come and go; an enlightened soul would neither welcome them nor wish them gone: their presence and absence would make no difference to him, he being established somewhere else. He has identified himself with that which transcends all the three 'Guṇas' and their properties, before which all these are spread like a magician's curtain or are dancing like waves on the breast of the ocean of 'Prakṛti'.

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।
न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि कांक्षति ॥

(XIV. 22)

(15)

The above exposition shows the modifications of the body and its activities to be connected with nature and something apart from Brahma, so that the non-duality of Brahma stands demolished. In this connection it may be submitted that, although modifications and functions referred to above belong to Nature, they do not owe their existence to Nature. Just as the existence of a minister depends on the existence of the ruler, even so does Nature owe its existence to the Self or Spirit. The Spirit resides within the body of every creature and inspires all the activities of the body, such as the assimilation of food etc., and it is the Spirit on which the body takes its stand. It is not the vital airs which support the body, but the Self united with them. It is the same Self shining forth in you, me and every one else. Though manifested differently in different bodies, it is essentially the same everywhere. Hence it is called 'Vaiśwānara' (subsisting in all).

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥

(XV. 14)

(16)

One who has thus realized the close relation between 'Prakṛti' and 'Puruṣa' (Matter and Spirit) never engages in the fruitless effort of liberating himself from the bonds of Nature but constantly endeavours to realize his own self even while abiding in nature. Now, if one has unavoidably to abide in Nature, it is necessary to lay down the rules according to which he should do so. In this connection Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa says that there is a perpetual struggle going on in the heart of man between the Divine commandments as embodied in the Sāstras and the promptings of his desire. Now one who follows the dictates of his desire and disregards the injunctions of the Sāstras cannot obtain success, nor happiness, attainment of the highest goal being altogether out of question. This is what is sought to be conveyed by the following verse. Now it is necessary to understand the true significance of this dictum. To the ordinary man of the street, the word 'Sāstra' means scriptural ordinance; to those having a subtler

understanding, it means the Will of God who is the ultimate source of the scriptures. Wherever a man feels the call of duty, he takes it to be the Divine Will. Such a call of duty expresses itself, on the one hand, as Subjective Conscience, while, on the other, Objective Conscience, too, is evolved out of the same. In the Subjective as well as Objective Conscience the same inarticulate Divine Voice makes itself heard. One who believes in the Vedāntic theory that the same consciousness shines forth in the cognizer as well as the object cognized, can easily understand the above statement. The Subjective Conscience regulates the Objective Conscience. Harmony between the two is the consummation aimed at here. Arjuna, who had under a fit of faint-heartedness forgotten the duty of a Kṣatriya,is warned by Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣna not to allow himself to be swayed by his desires but to follow the rules of conduct prescribed for a Kṣatriya by wise men after a psychological study of human nature, and known as Sāstra in common parlance. One who has not acquired the high ability and competence to revise the Objective Conscience, should keep his Subjective Conscience under the guidance of the Objective Conscience, as his Subjective Conscience may be full of errors. Of course, a highly competent soul is entitled to revise the Objective Conscience with the help of his Subjective Consciousnsss; for, even at a time when people have missed the real sense or spirit of the Sāstras, one who has become God-like or God-identified preserves it in its pure and vigorous aspect. We should try to understand the following verse in the light of the above explanation:—

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥

(XVI. 23)

(17)

How does one who respects the sanctity of usage and scriptural ordinance established or inspired by God conduct himself in this world, has been indicated in the following verse. Language is the principal medium of dealing with the world. Therefore, taking language as the representative of all other media, it has been pointed out what sort of language one should speak. Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa says that the words of a person referred to above never cause annoyance to others and are truthful, agreeable and wholesome. This is as it should be. But it should also be particularly borne in mind that if truthfulness and the wholesome nature of the advice given do not appeal to the man to whom such advice is tendered, these virtues carry no weight with the addressee. Hence it is necessary that one should speak such words as are agreeable and at the same time truthful and wholesome. There are occasions in one's life when there is antinomy between truth, good intention and agreeablility; but it is always essential to seek to reconcile all the three. Such an attitude will bear splendid results. But where it is not possible to reconcile the three, what should be done ? An answer to this question is given in the verse quoted below by allowing a distinct place to 'सत्य' (truth) and placing it foremost of all, and by placing the words 'प्रिय' and 'हित' after 'सत्य' and thus assigning them a secondary position. There is seldom any conflict between truth and good intenion; nevertheless, wherever such a conflict is visible, truth should be given preference over other virtues, as it is truth alone which is wholesome in the long run. Although agreeable words are less important than truth and good intention, it is highly essential that even if every word that is uttered is not agreeable, at least it should not cause annoyance. It is possible to speak true and wholesome words without causing annoyance. One who has not studied morality as a science ('Swādhāya') cannot employ such language towards another. Even if he does so, it will be regarded as hypocrisy and nothing else. Hence it is necessary to study sacred books or scriptures. The word "तपस्" occurring at the end of the verse is also significant. It means that all this should be done as a sacred duty for the sake of God.This is called Tapas because it curbs

passions—selfish desire (काम). This much of explanation will do for the following verse:—

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥

(XVII. 16)

(18)

After listening to the whole discourse of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna says: "The veil of delusion has been lifted from my eyes through Thy grace. My consciousness has been awakened and my doubts dispelled. I am now at Thy beck and call and will do as Thou biddest me to do." This being the concluding verse of the last chapter, it is full of mystic meaning.

The gist of the verse is that liberation can be attained through knowledge—and not through action. In other words, liberation does not bring about anything new: it only consists in the realization of one's own being. The very nature of the Self is such that it can only be known: it cannot be operated upon in any way. Action belongs to the plane of nature—natural phenomena—and not to the witness of these phenomena. Action does not beget knowledge: the light of knowledge, on the other hand, lends a peculiar charm to it and gives it an altogether new aspect. Hence the seeker after liberation believes that the tree of 'Vedānta' should be fed with nectar at the root; for, feeding the root alone will bring forth flowers and leaves in great abundance. Once the root gets withered up, no amount of washing the branches and leaves will keep the tree alive.

It is essential to remember in this connection that Knowledge brings about the state of 'निस्त्रैगुण्य' (freedom from the three Guṇas) and is not characterised by a preponderance of 'Tamoguṇa'. The 'Vedānta' philosophy does not aim at making us inactive: it does not teach us to remain idle. It aims, however, at illuminating action with knowledge and thus transforming it into knowledge itself. This is what is meant by the 'Karmayoga' and 'Karma-Sannyāsa' of the 'Gītā'. One who has thus realized the identity of Yoga and Sannyāsa is rid of all fears and behaves in accordance with the Divine Will. He understands it well that just as the transactions of this world cannot bind God, cannot detract from his transcendental (अच्युत) nature—'Prakṛti' or 'Māyā' does not bring duality in Brahma,—similarly, the activities of this body cannot affect the soul, cannot bind its real or spiritual nature. Just as the body is a part of 'Prakṛti' (Matter), even so is the soul a part and parcel of God. But does Consciousness allow itself to be partitioned and thus admit of the relation of part and whole ? Just as by sheer force of imagination we conceive the body to be a part of 'Prakṛti', even so do we conceive the soul to be a part of God ? Really speaking, just as 'Prakṛti' itself assumes the shape of a body, in the same way God Himself appears as the individual soul. The soul and God are not distinct personalities as 'you' and 'I' are. God is present in both of us. He is not an object of cognition like the various objects that we see all round. He is, however, the supreme principle which illuminates the objects and makes them cognizable. By pondering over this fact, we shall realize the incongruity of conceiving God as different from the soul.

The soul and God are identical. It is He who is manifested as the plurality of souls. Constantly musing over this fact makes us feel our identity with God, unfolds our latent divinity. One who has thus been rid of delusion born of non-discrimination between the Self and non-self and realized his own nature, does not perceive duality in nature. He is fully convinced that whatever he appears to do is really done by God. For 'doing' is the work of nature and the latter is identical with God. Thus all that appears is a manifestation of God. This is what is called a perception of non-duality.

How is such a realization to come ? Only through the manifestation—'grace' of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa who is the Supreme

Guru (Teacher) and the Supreme Self. The following is the verse containing this ideal.

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

(XVIII. 73)

Again,

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥

(XVIII. 78)

"Where there is Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga, and Pārtha, the wielder of (the Gāṇḍīvā) bow, assured are there prosperity, victory and happiness and firm morality: such is my conviction."

The Gītā ends here. Sañjaya is quite right when he says that where there is a Yogeśwara like Srī Kṛṣṇa and an archer like Arjuna, assured are there prosperity, victory and happiness and firm morality. These auspicious virtues are not concomitant with despondency, imbecility and inactivity, etc. They exist only where there is Srī Kṛṣṇa, the Controller of Karmayoga, and an archer like Arjuna who has girded up his loins for conquering the demoniac nature.

(Kalyan)

The Peace Eternal.

But the disciplined self, moving among sense-objects with senses free from attraction and repulsion, mastered by the Self, goeth to Peace.

In that Peace the extinction of all pains ariseth for him, for of him whose heart (Chetaḥ) is peaceful the Reason (Buddhi) soon attaineth equilibrium.

(*Gītā II. 64-65*)

The *Mahābhārata* contains the substance of all the Vedas and gives a detailed history of the Bhārata dynasty. *Gītā* is the soul of *Mahābhārata*. Hence the *Gītā* is the gist of all scriptures.

—*Nīlakaṇṭha.*

Lord Hari, out of mercy, has made a boat of the *Bhagavadgītā*, so that His devotees may steer clear of the vast ocean of the world.

—*Keśava Kashmīrī.*

My Devout Prayer

I believe that in the whole history of mankind, the greatest outstanding personality having the deepest and the most profound knowledge and possessing superhuman powers is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I further believe that in all the living languages of the world there is no book so full of truth-knowledge, and yet so handy as the *Bhagavadgītā*.

This wonderful book of eighteen small chapters contains the essence of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads and is a sure guide of the way to perfect happiness here as well as hereafter. It preaches the threefold way of Knowledge, Action and Devotion, leading to the highest good of mankind. It brings to men the highest knowledge, the purest love and the most luminous action. It teaches self-control, the threefold austerity, non-violence, truth, compassion, obedience to the call of duty for the sake of duty and putting up a fight against unrighteousness (*Adharma*).

Full of knowledge and truth and moral teaching, it has the power to raise men from the lowest depths of ignorance and suffering to the highest glories of divinebeings. To my knowledge, there is no book in the whole range of the world's literature so high above all as the *Bhagavadgītā,* which is a treasure-house of *Dharma*, not only for the Hindus but for all mankind. Several scholars of different countries have by a study of this book acquired a pure and perfect knowledge of the Supreme Being who is responsible for the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, and have gained a stainless desireless Supreme devotion to His feet. Those men and women are very fortunate who have got this little lamp of light full of an inexhaustible quantity of the oil of love, showing the way out of the darkness and ignorance of the world. It is incumbent on such people to use it for all mankind groping in the darkness.

I sincerely wish and earnestly pray to God that I may live to hear the news that from the richest mansion to the poorest cottage, every Hindu home is not without a copy of the *Gītā* and that it is held in reverence by every Hindu with all the devotion due to a form of the Divine. I also wish to hear that satisfactory arrangments, backed by knowledge and devotion as also by money, have been made to popularise the teaching of the *Gītā* among all sects and classes of this country as well as other countries all over the world.

May this please my Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Madan Mohan Malaviya.

The Triveni of the Gita.

By Hirendranath Dutt, M. A., B. L., Vedantaratna.

I

The streams of the three rivers, Gangā, Yamunā and Saraswatī have joined together at Prayāga to flow towards the ocean. Thus Prayāga at their confluence is a sacred place of pilgrimage.

The stream of the 'Gītā' as opened by Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa, as the charioteer of Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra, is, to one who has a dip into that stream, a veritable triad, newer and happier in its nature. For, in that novel triad the three different paths of rituals, knowledge and devotion, that were then being followed, were wonderfully harmonised and joined together; and that purifying triple stream has flown towards the Lord after having overflown the whole world.

This harmony is a speciality with the 'Gītā'. Nowhere else in the scriptures is the idea so vividly expressed. Hence in the 'Gītā' are contained all scriptures; it is the essence of all religion; it is the epitome of all Sāstras. In a word, it is the Bible of Humanity. So should the 'Song' (the 'Gītā') be well-sung:—गीता सुगीता कर्तव्या.

In order to elucidate this harmony as propounded in the 'Gītā', we would first discuss in brief the nature of the three contemporary cults, viz. those of rituals, knowledge and devotion, that were in vogue when the 'Gītā' was preached.

II

In the olden days, the Ṛṣīs that were in favour of rituals used to say that the main objective of the Vedas is to introduce rituals, all else therein is of little importance.

आम्नायस्य क्रियार्थत्वादानर्थक्यमतदर्थानाम् ।

(*Mimamsa-Sutra* I.ii.1.)

What is 'Karma' or ritual ? Performance of the sacrificial Yajña as embodied in the Vedas is 'Karma'. What benefit does it offer ? By this one can conquer the heavens, the place of happiness,—स्वर्गकामः अश्वमेधेन यजेत्. Because,

सर्वान् लोकान् जयति, मृत्युं तरति, पाप्मानं तरति, ब्रह्महत्यां तरति, यः अश्वमेधेन यजते ।

The person for whom horse-sacrifice is performed conquers the worlds, overcomes death, is released from sin in general, and even from that of Brahmanicide. Moreover he attains immortality as a result of undecaying merits obtained.

अक्षय्यं ह वै चातुर्मास्ययाजिनः सुकृतं भवति ·········आपाम सोमममृता अभूम ।

Thus, in the opinion of the ritualist the only way to deliberation is ritual or 'Karma'.

III

Again, the Ṛṣis in favour of the path of wisdom would refute the above theory and say: प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा यज्ञरूपाः— the ritual of a Yajñic sacrifice is but a rickety boat for deliverance from the cosmic ocean. The fruit of a ritual is not only impermanent but it turns to be the cause of bondage again—कर्मणा बध्यते जन्तुः.

In the opinion of the 'Jñanavādī', therefore, it is not ritual but wisdom that is the path *par excellence* of final beatitude. It is not by performance of rituals but by throwing off all ritual, that immortality is attained.

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन, त्यागेनैकेनामृतत्वमानशुः ।

In a word, the 'Jñānavādī' declares, deliverance is attainable only through wisdom.

IV

At this conflict of ideas, it is the 'Gītā' that establishes harmony between the contending parties by giving out the 'Mantra' (formula) of reconciliation.

The 'Gītā' declares: If the 'Karma' is undertaken without skill, it may be the cause of bondage, but there is a particular way to perform an acion, that would never bind the doer. That is what is called a device—योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्. This device is called 'Karmayoga'. The Lord has said in the 'Gītā' that you are to pass three different stages, one after another before you can reach the stage of 'Karmayoga'.

What are those three stades ? The three stages are:

(1) Renouncing all fruit of action:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

(Gita II. 47.)

Your concern is with action, never with its fruit: so you have to relinquish all desire for the fruit, taking as equal pleasure or pain, gain or loss, victory or defeat, and go on performing action in an unattached manner.

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

(Gita II. 38)

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

(Gita III. 19).

(2) The throwing off of egotism:

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥

(Gita XIII. 29)

"One who sees that verily it is Prakṛti (Matter) that performs all action and that the Self is quite actionless—that one (and none else) does really see".

That is to say, 'Thy wealth is given unto thee: how does it affect me ?'

(3) The offering of all action unto the Lord:

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥
शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥

(Gita IX. 27, 28)

"Whatsoever you do, either by way of eating, sacrificing, giving or performing austerity, you offer unto Me. Thus you will be delivered from the bonds of action, yielding good and evil fruits, and you will be set free, harmonized by Yoga of renunciation, and shall attain Me."

V

So has the 'Gītā' said:

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।
× × ×
एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥

(V. 4, 5)

That is to say, the ignorant only take 'Jñānayoga' and 'Karmayoga' as separate; the wise do not. Really speaking, one who finds both as one, the same is a real seer.

Thus, according to the 'Gītā', 'Jñānayoga' and 'Karmayoga' both lead to liberation. The 'Gītā' does never support the one-sided view that it is wisdom and not action, or it is action and not wisdom, through which liberation is attainable.

In fact, in order to reach the stage of 'Karmayoga' as propounded in the 'Gītā', it is not sufficient on the part of the devotee to be a doer of action: he has to be wise as well. Without wisdom how can a devotee throw off egotism ? It has to be noted that such wisdom is not discrimination between Puruṣa and Prakṛti, Intelligence and Matter; but it is 'Tattvajñāna', the knowledge by which a devotee can, in the first instance, find all Jīvas in the Self, and finally all in God.

येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥

(IV. 35).

One who is so wise is well-balanced in mind—येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः (V. 19). To him a Brahman adorned with learning and humility, an elephant, and even a dog and an outcaste are all equal as his own self.

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

(V. 18)

This is no wonder at all. For one who has real wisdom does find God everywhere:—

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥

(Gita. VII, 18)

"At the end of many births of devotion a devotee finds 'Brahma' everywhere: verily such a noble soul is rare."

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥
(Gita VI. 29)

That is to say, the Self united with the Supreme Spirit by contemplation thereof, as a result of the power to behold everything equally, 'does not see simply the movable and the immovable but everything as His image; everything appears to him as the Deity of his heart's desire', as it is expressed in the following Bengali couplet:—

स्थावर जङ्गम देखे ना; देखे तार मूर्त्ति ।
सर्वस्थाने हय तार इष्टदेवस्फूर्त्ति ॥

VI

Now the question arises, Where is the scope for 'Bhakti' (devotion) in the 'Karma-yoga' as propounded in the 'Gītā' ?

It is in the placing of all 'Karma' in the Lord.

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥
(V. 10)

"One who acts placing all actions in the Lord, abandoning attachment, is unaffected by sin, as a lotus leaf by the waters."

In fact, how can the doer place all actions in the Lord, until he or she has turned to be a devotee ?

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥

"Though ever performing all actions, taking refuge in Me, by My grace the doer obtains the eternal indestructible abode."

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥
(Gita XII. 6)

"Verily they (the Karmayogīs), regarding Me as their highest goal and dedicating all actions unto Me, worship, meditating on Me, with a whole-hearted faith that knows no second."

VII

To explain the intimate relation between wisdom (Jñāna) and devotion (Bhakti), the 'Gītā' inculcates that there is no question as to the extreme purity of wisdom (Jñāna): 'न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।'(IV. 38), and that the ocean of sin can be crossed over by the boat of wisdom—'सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि' (IV. 36); but the end of all wisdom is devotion—निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा (XVIII. 50).

Further, while relating the characteristics of wisdom, the 'Gītā' says:—

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
(XIII. 11)

"Unflinching devotion to me and no other objects is wisdom." Again, who is the perfect devotee ? No doubt, it is the wise: तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते । (VII. 17). "Of all devotees the wise is the best, for he is ever devoted to the Lord." Such a wise person is the soul of the Lord, as it were— so dear is he to the Lord !

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥
(VII. 18)

Such a wise devotee, devoid of all attachment, fear and aversion, does attain the Lord by the devotion of wisdom;

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥
(IV. 10)

He alone who has reached the highest stage of wisdom and, having cast aside violence and arrogance, attachment and aversion, 'I-ness' and 'My-ness', has advanced beyond all grief and ignorance, and has thus become one with 'Brahma'—only such a person entertains supreme devotion to the Lord, as we find in the 'Gītā':—

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥
ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥
(XVIII. 53-54)

Thus, the devotee, purified with wisdom, truly knows who and what the Lord is, and, having thus known Him in essence, he enters into the Lord:—

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥
(XVIII. 55)

An echo of the same we find in the 'Bhāgavata':

आत्मारामाश्च मुनयो निर्ग्रन्था अप्युरुक्रमे ।
कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्थंभूतगुणो हरिः ॥
(I. VII. 10)

"Even those sages who delight solely in 'Paramātmā', and the knot of whose ignorance and passion has been severed, are devoted to the all-powerful Hari without any motive; for Hari is of such excellent nature and attributes."

VIII

We find, therefore, that the 'Gītā' is full of adoration for devotion. It is not unknown to the reader of the 'Gītā' in how many and what ways the superiority of devotion is established therein.

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।
यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥
(VIII. 22)

"O Pārtha, the Highest Spirit—who is omnipresent and in whom all beings abide—may be reached by unswerving devotion."

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥
(VI. 31)

"He who, established in unity', worships Me (the Lord) as residing in all beings, that Yogī, dwell where he may, lives in Me."

The 'Gītā' goes so far as to say that 'of all the Yogīs the one with the inmost self resting in the Lord, full of faith, adores Him, is considered to be the most completely harmonized,:—

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥
(VI. 47)

IX

Thus we find, the teaching of the 'Gītā' is:

"IF YOU WANT TO CROSS THE OCEAN OF THIS WORLD OF DEATH, FIX YOUR HEART ON THE LORD, CONCENTRATE YOUR THOUGHTS ON HIM; DOUBTLESS SHALL YOU ABIDE IN HIM AT THE END OF THIS BODY."

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥
(XII. 8)

What more, the supreme teaching of the 'Gītā', with regard to 'Sādhanā', the course of devotion, is:—

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः श्रृणु मे परमं वचः ।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥
मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥
(XVIII. 64-65)

"Listen, O Arjuna, to My supreme word, most secret of all; beloved art thou of Me, so I speak for thy benefit: merge thy mind in Me, be My devotee: sacrifice unto Me, adore Me; and verily shalt thou come unto Me. I plight thee My faith, for thou art dear to Me."

For, according to the'Gītā',the Divine Illusion (Māyā) of the Lord, consisting of the three Guṇas, which is the cause of bondage of the individual Being (Jīva), is hard to be transcended. Only they pass beyond this Illusion who approach Him for refuge.

X

Now, what is the way to approach the Lord ?

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥
(XVIII. 62)

"Take refuge in Him, with all thy heart, O Bhārata (Arjuna); by His grace thou shalt gain the uttermost repose, the eternal above."

XI

It is worthy of our notice in this connection that the devotion advocated in the 'Gītā' is not emotion proper, or the blind and naked adherence of the emotional mind, or a mere attachment (to the Lord) devoid of wisdom or action. Doubt may be removed if we would only look into the characteristics of the devotee, as given in Chapter XII of the Gītā:—

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥
सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मे मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥
यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥
अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥
यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न कांक्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥
समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् ।
अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥

(XII. 13-19)

"That devotee of Mine who bears no ill-will to any Being, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, and is exempt from arrogance and love of self, equable in pleasure and pain, and of a forgiving character, who is ever content and harmonious and self-restrained, and firm in faith, and who has resigned his heart and soul to Me—that devotee is dear to Me.

"He by whom the world is never harassed and who is not himself harassed by the world, and is free from elation and anger, fear and anxiety—he is dear to Me. He who wants nothing, is pure, efficient, passionlees, free from worldly agitations, and renounces every undertaking (endeavour with a motive)—he, devoted to Me, is dear to Me.

"He who has no exultation or hatred, no grief or desire, and has renounced all good or evil—such a devotee is dear to Me.

"Alike to foe and friend and also in fame and ignominy, alike to cold and heat, pleasure and pain, destitute of attachment, taking equally praise and reproach, silent, wholly content with whatever obtained, devoid of support, firm in mind—such a devotee is dear to Me."

XII

Again, in the following couplet the 'Gītā' explicitly shows that the devotee of the Lord is not simply an emotional being, but a worker (doer of action) who is wise as also worshipping (i. e. devoted to the Lord)— all in one.

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥

(XI. 55)

"O Pāṇḍava (Arjuna), he who works for Me, has Me for his highest aim, is devoted to Me, is freed from attachment and bears enmity towards no creatures,—such a one enters into Me."

Firstly, one who is मत्कर्मकृत्-who works for Me, (i. e., as an instrument in the hands of the Lord, in His name and for His sake)—performs the duty keeping himself संगविवर्जित, i. e., अनासक्त, freed from attachment,—in a word, one who is a Karmayogī; secondly, one who is निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु (i. e., bears no enmity towards any creature) and by acquiring the essential wisdom does see everywhere the same (सर्वत्र समदर्शनः), and thus feels oneness (एकत्वमनुपश्यति), one who knows no enmity, is friendly and compassionate towards all (मैत्रः करुण एव च)-that is to say, one who is a Jñānayogī; and finally, one who (is मत्परःमद्भक्तः) has the Lord as the highest aim, and is devoted to the Lord, with whom the Lord is the supreme goal, the only abode, who is not divertible, one who has the mind fixed on the Lord, sacrifices to Him and is mindful of Him, who has his life (hidden) in the Lord, to whom the Lord is the mind and love :(मति,रति), one who is supremely devoted to the Lord (भागवतोत्तमः);—in one word, one who is a Bhaktiyogī, that one finds the Lord, none else !

XIII

Now, why has the 'Gītā' harmonized and joined together these three different paths far above the one-sidedness of the votaries of work (Karma, action, ritual), wisdom (Jñāna) and worship (Bhakti, devotion) throwing off the narrow bigotry of 'no-way-but-this' (My 'ism' is the only 'ism', and the like ideas) ?

The reason is not far to seek. We know, 'the Being' is but a part of 'the Supreme Brahma',—a spark, as it were, of the fire of Brahma; a drop, as it were, of the ocean of सच्चिदानन्द. In the drop all the attributes of the ocean are hidden. 'सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं चेत्यस्तीह' (Pañchadaśī); 'अग्नेर्हि विस्फुलिङ्गोऽग्निरेव' (Sankara).

That is to say; the Being is only the undeveloped सच्चिदानन्द. Its ultimate aim (नियति) is to develop the spark into kindled fire, to expand the drop to the great ocean; in a word, to become developed सच्चिदानन्द. "He is sown in weakness in order to be raised to power." This is what is called ब्रह्मसायुज्य—'always remaining great (Brahma), he enters the Great (Brahma)'. ब्रह्मैव सन् ब्रह्माप्येति ('Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, IV. iv. 6).

How should a Being become 'Brahma' the Eternal ? By accomplishment of 'Sāyujya'. If, by accomplishment, the un-

expressed qualities of सत्, चित्, and आनन्द be fully developed, then the Being can become 'Brahma'—the Eternal. Then it is possible for the Being to understand तत्त्वमसि, 'Thou art that'; then alone It can say सोऽहम्'—'I am He'. 'चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम्'.

XIV

For the accomplishment of this सायुज्य, not one alone of the three paths, viz., those of work, wisdom and worship, is sufficient. The चिद्भाव of the 'Paramātmā'—a partial expression of which is found through the विज्ञानमय कोश of the Being—has to be fully expressed through the path of 'wisdom'. And again, the आनन्दभाव of the 'Paramātmā'—a partial expression of which is found in the आनन्दमयकोश of the Being, has also to be fully expressed. Finally, the सद्भाव—a partial expression of which is found in the हिरण्मय कोश of the Being, has no doubt to be fully expressed.

That is to say, the Being has got to be at once, in the same body, वीर, पीर and धीर, hero, saint and sage.

When the Being will thus be fully expressed in all the three Bhāvas, सत् चित् and आनन्द, when the partly expressed प्रताप, प्रज्ञा and प्रेम will reach their climax, then the Being will no longer remain a mere being, it will be transformed into the 'Brahma'—the Eternal. It will then declare, uttering the hymn of the Yajurveda, 'यो सावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि'.

Thus we find that the 'Gītā' teaches that a simultaneous practice of work, wisdom and worship is necessary for a full expression of the Being—and not one only of them, i. e. either 'Karma' or 'Jñāna' or 'Bhakti' is sufficient for the purpose. All these three paths have to be pursued, in order that the Being may find its full expression in the 'Brahma'.

Thus, in short, the three different paths of work, wisdom and worship, have been wonderfully harmonised and joined together in the course of the 'Triveni' as presented in the 'Gītā', and in that the Being must have a thorough dip.

The Yoga of the Gita.

By Sri Krishna Prem Bhikhari.

Now-a-days, both in the East and West we hear a great deal of talk about Yoga; but it is sometimes forgotten that the greatest text-book of Yoga is the Gītā. The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali, Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā, Siva Saṃhitā and similar books are, no doubt, expositions of Yoga; but they have neither the range nor the authority of the Gītā. They are all text-books of particular schools, but the Gītā is a book which has been accepted as authoritative by the leaders of all schools; it is one of the three Prasthānas of the Vedānta and no teacher, whatever his Sampradāya, can ever have the slightest chance of having his views accepted as an exposition of Vedānta unless he can show that they are in accord with the teachings of this priceless treatise. Not only in India, but in all the world's collection of mystical books (and the number of these of the first rank is not very large), there are few that can equal it, and, as far as my knowledge goes, positively none that surpasses it as a teacher of High Yoga, of that which, as long ago as Yājñavalkya, was termed "the ancient narrow path which stretcheth far away."

That the Gītā sets out to teach Yoga can admit of no doubt. Each chapter, from the first to the eighteenth, is termed a Yoga and Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself is given the highly significant title of Yogeśvara. The words 'Yoga', 'Yogī' and 'Yukta' are perhaps the most commonly recurring words in the whole book and, in Chapter VI, verse 46, the Yogī is extolled above all other classes of Sādhaka and Arjuna is urged to become a Yogī himself.

But here we are faced with a difficulty. Traditionally there are said to be several Yogas, such as Jñānayoga, Bhaktiyoga, Karmayoga, Rājayoga, Haṭhayoga and perhaps some others. Which of these, if any, is the one recommended by the

Gītā and which it praises so highly ? And this leads us to another problem. Does the Gītā set forth several Yogas as alternative paths, or does it teach one Yoga and, if so, to which of the above-mentioned Yogas does it correspond?

The answer to this question has been much obscured by the attempts of the various commentators to exhibit the Gītā as primarily supporting the special Yoga emphasised by their own particular school, Jñana, Bhakti or Karma. In consequence, the average man, only too painfully aware of the strained interpretations which most of the commentators find themselves reduced to, drifts lazily into the conclusion that the Gītā probably teaches all of them alternatively and that the best thing to do is to pick out the one which most appeals to the particular individual. In this the average man is probably wiser than the commentators; but perhaps a better method still is to put aside one's own likes and dislikes (Gītā III. 34) as well as the views of the particular Sampradaya in which by birth or attachment one finds oneself, and impartially to study the text itself with the aid of that intuition which, as Plotinus said, is "a faculty which all possess but few use", a faculty, moreover, which develops with use and decays with neglect.

The view which is set forth below is one which claims no authority beyond its reasonableness. Though I have endeavoured to profit by all the writings which seem to me to bear the signs of having been inspired by personal experience as opposed to theological argument, I have made no use whatever of that too common practice which consists in making the words mean something quite different from what they appear to mean in the interests of a supposed 'reconciliation' with some other book or books. It is, of course, obvious that the Gītā is closely connected with some of the Upaniṣads, with the Mahābhārata and possibly with the Brahma Sūtras*; but there is no reason for attempting a forced reconciliation with other books than these.

The eighteen chapters of the Gītā divide naturally into three blocks containing six chapters in each and, if we examine this division, we shall find that it corresponds to three clear sections of teaching. In the first block of chapters Srī Kṛṣṇa expounds the teachings of some five different schools corresponding more or less to the different types of Yoga referred to above. In the second six He sets forth the heart of His own teaching and bestows upon the Chelā the Divine Vision. In the last six He explains certain technical doctrines an understanding of which is necessary if the Chelā is to make a full use of the Yoga.

Thus, taking these in more detail, in Chapter II we have an account of the Yoga taught by the Sānkhyas. This clearly represents a system of Jñānayoga, but it will not do to identify it with the teachings of the classical Sāṃkhya as expounded at a later date by Iśwara Kṛṣṇa in his Kārikās. On the other hand, it will not be correct to take it, as is done by some, as being the exact equivalent of what would now be called Vedāntic Jñānayoga. The explanation of the term must, in fact, be sought in the Mahābhārata, in which work more than one system of Sānkhya is described, which will be found to throw light on the meaning of the term in the Gītā. However, here we are only concerned to note that it is a species of Yoga through Tattvajñāna and involving complete inaction.

The third chapter deals with Karmayoga in the sense of the performance of action as duty without desire for results. The fourth is entitled 'Jñānayoga'; the fifth deals with Yoga by Sanyāsa and the sixth, which is entitled 'Abhyāsayoga' (or in some texts 'Dhyānayoga' or 'Adhyātmayoga') corresponds more or less with what is usually called Rājayoga.

Now, it should be particularly noted that, at the commencement of Chapter IV, Srī Kṛṣṇa expressly describes the teaching that He is imparting as "this imperishable Yoga" (इमं योगं अव्ययम्) and declares that He Himself was the original promulgator of it, having

* But see 'Sankara-Bhashya' on *Gita* XIII. 4, where he takes the word *Brahma-Sutra* to refer to the *Upanishads*.

initiated the succession of Teachers in the far past. It is to be observed that He does not speek of several Yogas but of one imperishable Yoga, which, however, cannot refer merely to the contents of this chapter, since in verse 3 He clearly indicates that it includes what He has already been expounding.

Most significant of all, however, is verse 2, in which it is stated that by the lapse of great time this Yoga, the imperishable primæval Yoga, decayed in the world and, as it were, became lost or destroyed as it descended down the long line of Gurus and Chelās.

The significance of this statement is, to my mind, very great indeed. It indicates that the Yoga as originally taught by the eternal Kṛṣṇa to Vivaswān was a single, unitary and all-comprehensive Yoga. It was simply 'Yoga', without any of the qualifying prefixes which are usually applied to the word. As it passed from Guru to Chelās, however, there was an inevitable tendency for it to split up into parts on account of the different degrees of emphasis given to its various aspects by Chelās of different temperaments and 'Adhikāra'. Some emphasised one aspect and others a different one, according to their own partial understandings and instinctive predispositions towards Jñāna, Bhakti or Karma, or, as we may say, according to whether the head, the heart or the hands were dominant in their characters. It is thus that out of the one original all-embracing Yoga we have come to the various partial Yogas, all of which, however great may be their, excellencies, are more or less one-sided and do violence in more or less degree to the richness and variety of the soul.

It is this process of splitting up into parts that Srī Kṛṣṇa means to describe in saying that the Yoga has been lost (for there can be no doubt that there were plenty of exponents of the various partial Yogas about in His day, as is testified to by the Gītā itself) and it is just this lost unity that He proposes to restore in His teachings to Arjuna and which is the central teaching of the Gītā and particularly of the second block of six chapters.

In the first place, let us note the way in which He deals with the various partial Yogas described in the first six chapters. Passing over the first chapter as irrelevant for our present purpose (though it has a very great importance in another connection with which we are not here concerned), we should note that Srī Kṛṣṇa is at great pains in chapters two and three, as also elsewhere in the book, to unite the actionless Tattvajñāna of the Sāṃkhyas with the dispassionate action of the (Karma) Yogīs, saying that children, not wise men, look upon them as separate. More than that, towards the end of each chapter, He expressly completes these systems by directing attention to Himself as the central Divine Reality without which the Yogas remain incomplete. Thus, in Chapter II, verses 59 and 61, the importance of the vision of the Supreme and of being intent on Kṛṣṇa (मत्परः) is stressed as a necessary supplement to the Tattvajñāna of the Sāṃkhyas, which was rather apt to ignore that aspect of the process. The Karmayogīs, too, are reminded that it is not sufficient merely to perform such action as is duty, (a vague conception, in fact, unless we narrow it to the performance of the orthodox Nitya and Naimittika Karmas,) but that their idea must be supplemented by offering all actions to the Lord (मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्य).

The Jñānīs of Chapter IV are reminded of the necessity for knowledge of the Divine birth and *actions* of Srī Kṛṣṇa and are instructed that, though unattached to the fruits of action, and therefore actionless in the higher sense, they are to be intent upon action (कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तः) and the culmination of their knowledge is expressly stated to be the vision of all beings in Him. The follower of the Sannyāsayoga of the fifth chapter has also to learn that it is not actions but 'attachment to the fruit of actions' that has to be renouced and, again, the concluding verse brings the teaching round once more to Him, the Friend of all beings.

Lastly, in Chapter VI, the Rājayogī is reminded that the bliss he seeks is to be found in Kṛṣṇa (verse 15) and, once more, the Yoga is shown to culminate

(verses 30 and 31) in the vision of Kṛṣṇa seated in the hearts of all creatures, without which it degenerates into a selfish search for a personal bliss, oblivious of the sorrows of suffering creatures. An inner selfishness of this type is the great danger on the path of Rāja-yoga of the ordinary type, which seeks the extinction of one's personal sorrow by the attainment of Kaivalya, and it is to obviate this pitfall that Kṛṣṇa lays so much stress on the necessity of making Him the centre and heart of the Yoga. For, when it is seen that He is in all beings, it will no longer be possible for the Yogī to remain indifferent to the sufferings of others and preoccupied with his own individual salvation.

Having thus welded once more into a whole the disjoined members of His Yoga, the Lord goes on to show in the next block of six chapters how this central and unifying knowledge of Him is to be acquired and of what it consists; for most assuredly it does not consist merely in knowing that, at the end of Dwāpara Yuga, the Supreme appeared on earth in a human form and wore a yellow Dhotī. Accordingly, He commences this section of the teaching with the significant words:—

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥

"With the mind clinging to Me, O Pārtha, peforming Yoga, refuged in Me, how thou shalt without doubt *know Me to the uttermost,* that hear thou."

This, the central and all important knowledge, "which having known, there is nothing in this world that remains to be known", is the theme of Chapters VII and VIII. The extreme rarity of this knowledge is insisted on (Chap. VII verses 3 and 19); the types of His devotees, His relation to His Prakṛtis, His Mantra, Parama Dhāma and the Path leading thereto are all set forth with a luminous clarity which hides from the superficial eye the profound depths concealed in the apparentle simply words.

This ultimate wisdom, the Royal Secret, as the Lord terms it, is continued into the next chapter, which is expressly stated to be the most secret of all (गुह्यतमम्) and in the setting forth of which Srī Kṛṣṇa is forced to have recourse to a paradox (verses 4 and 5), which reveals that this wisdom is no mere intellectual knowledge, but one which can only be grasped by direct spiritual intuition.

One other highly significant word is used in verse 2 and that is the word 'प्रत्यक्षावगमम्', which may perhaps be translated as "possible of direct perception". The importance, of this word cannot be overestimated. It proclaims that this priceless knowledge, the Wisdom of Wisdoms, is not a matter of blind faith which has to be accepted on trust, but something which can be seen by each and realized for himself by anyone who cares to tread the Path. This statement is sheer literal truth and is the glorious charter of man's freedom, shattering to bits the obscurantism of the faith-mongering creeds and proclaiming to the 'dead' in clarion tones, "Awake ! Arise and tread the Path; why linger in the tomb !"

Note also the supreme verse at the end of the chapter (IX 34), the one verse in the Gītā that occurs twice, (the slight difference in the wording being negligible), and of which more later.

The significance of Chapter X is to be found in Arjuna's question in verse 17. He asks how he is to achieve this knowledge of the all-pervading Lord and in what ways he is to meditate upon Him, and Srī Kṛṣṇa, in answer, describes the method of awakening the inner eye of the soul and so prepares His Chelā for the sublime and wondrous Vision that bursts upon his astonished gaze in the next chapter as, in due season, it bursts upon the amazed vision of all who tread the Path even to this day.

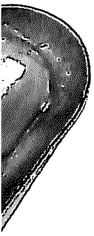
As soon as Arjuna's emotions subside after this terrific experience, he is given (in Chapter XII) the essence of the teaching on devotion, which has, up to this point, pervaded the whole like butter concealed in milk. Here, the nature of Bhakti is set forth clearly and explicitly in verses 13 to the end. All who aspire to Bhakti—should ponder well these teachings and learn the nature of true Bhakti as distinct from

Srimad Bhagavadgita.

अथ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

With Mahatmya.

गीताप्रेस, गोरखपुर



the frothing emotionalism that too often passes by that name. Truly did another great Teacher say:—Not everyone that saith unto me 'Lord ! Lord !' shall enter the Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."

The Yoga has been taught, the eye of the soul awakened, the glorious Vision given. Nothing remains but the imparting of some technical instructions which shall enable the disciple to tread the Path he has been shown and to practise the teachings he has received. Accordingly it is to this task that the remaining six chapters are devoted and it is only in the concluding sections of the last chapter that, by way of reminder, the discourse comes back to the main theme. In brief but unforgettable words the Lord summarises the chief points that He has taught and then, with all the emphasis at His command, declares in one brief verse the essence of the whole Path, the Supreme Word of His teaching.

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

"Merge thy mind in Me, be My devotee, sacrifice to Me (i, e. serve Me with thy actions), prostrate thyself before Me. I pledge thee My word that thou shalt come to Me, for thou art dear to Me."

We all strain and twist the verses of the Gītā in order to make it fit our preconceived notions. Some have claimed that the essence of the Gītā is summed up in the words 'योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्'—"Yoga is skill in action"—of Chapter II, Verse 50, while others proclaim that the Mahāvākya is to be found in verse 17 of Chapter III. But surely the plain words of the Lord leave no loophole for reasonable doubt. The fact that the verse quoted above occurs also in practically identical form at the conclusion of the chapter on the Royal Secret and, above all, the plain and emphatie words with which the verse is introduced as the परमं वचः at the conclusion of the whole teaching should place the matter beyond all reasonable dispute. Here in this verse we have the essence of the whole Yoga, the heart of the Lord's teaching. Let us note it carefully, for in it is summed up all.

The nature of man is threefold: intellectual, emotional and active; head, heart and hands. These three aspects are present in all men, though in varied degree and sometimes in a very unbalanced way and devoted usually to the pursuit of worldly objects. All three are to be turned away from outward things and transmuted into something divine by being devoted entirely to the service of the Supreme Reality, the Light of lights, the Stainless One, the Eternal Kṛṣṇa Himself.

First of all He is to be *known*, for the mind or intellectual faculty is to be placed in Him (मन्मना भव). This comes first because, without knowledge of Him, He can be neither loved nor served and, as the Sruti says, "apart from knowledge of Him there is no path to welfare."

Secondly, He is to be loved (मद्भक्तः), for a knowledge that is devoid of love is no knowledge and the heart must be transmuted as well as the head.

Thirdly, He must be served in action, for the love that does not issue in service is no real love. All actions must be made into a Yajña by being devoted to the service of Him, Him who is in all beings and who, seated in the hearts of a thousand thousand suffering forms, hears their piteous cries streaming up to the heavens and notes with His impartial gaze which of His would-be "Bhaktas" stands ready to serve. Certain it is that not the humblest wild creature of the woods mourns for its slaughtered young ones, but He, seated in the heart, notes the deed and repays the slayer in the fulness of time.

Lastly, we are bidden to prostrate ourselves at His feet, to cast utterly away all sense of self, all egoism of every sort and merge ourselves in the dust of His feet, for it is this that is the real meaning of prostration and not mere outward obeisances in temples. No shadow of 'self' is to remain if we aspire to reach Him.

This, then, is the heart of the Gītā, the Yoga of Yogas, and, as we have seen,

it is one which unites in one whole *all* the various sides of man's nature. Nothing less than this will do. There must be no unbalanced development, no forced one-sidedness. All, all must be transmuted and, if it be said that this is a hard and difficult path, the answer is that there is no other and Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself tells us that after many lives the wise man comes to Him. Sooner or later, all must tread the (दुर्गं पथम्), the razor-edged sharp path. This much, however, we may be sure of, namely, that however much the feet may bleed and the heart lose courage during the journey, He is there at our side, "closer to us than breathing; nearer than hands or feet", and never leaves us for one second of the long-drawn Path from an unknown beginning to the endless end.

If I have not commented upon verse 66, it is because it is one which none can understand save Those who have reached that sublime state and I do not care to sully its glorious promise with my weak words.

Salutation to the Gurus, to Those who stand upon the Farther Shore, to Those whose Light enlightens the world and to whose Feet is offered whatever truth these words contain.

Some Thoughts on the Gita.

By Swami Asangananda.

In the course of a very inspiring and illuminating address on "Gītā—The Universal Mother" to the students at the sacred city of Benares, the Athens of India, Mahatma Gandhi said, "......To-day the 'Gītā' is not only my Bible or my Koran; it is more than that; it is my mother. I lost my earthly mother, who gave me birth, long ago; but this Eternal Mother has completely filled her place by my side ever since. She has never changed, she has never failed me. When I am in difficulty or distress, I seek refuge in her bosom.........The 'Gītā' is the Universal Mother; she turns away nobody. Her door is wide open to anyone who knocks. A true votary of the 'Gītā' does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding.........There never was a man who worshipped her in that spirit and went back disappointed." Indeed, the 'Gītā' is the veritable embodiment of the Universal Mother. Like the most affectionate mother, she knows no difference between a child and a child and gives asylum to, nay, clasps all her children to her bosom and thus relieves them of the excruciating pangs of their sufferings when they are unfortunately placed at the scorching rays of trials and tribulations, temptations and bereavements. As a matter of fact, she has not only satisfied the intellectual hunger of innumerable philosophers during the period of their philosophical contentions and wranglings, nay, at the period of vacillation and, its natural consequence, scepticism, but has conferred solace and consolation, fortitude and firmness on many a soul at the time of penury, privation and bereavement.

All the recognized religions of the world that are extant in the world to-day are the outcome of direct intuitive experiences of Ṛṣis or seers of truth at different periods of the world's evolution; and these experiences of the mighty personages have been recorded and bodily incorporated in the scriptures that are the mainstay, nay, perennial fountains of unfailing strength and inexhaustible inspiration to countless votaries of several faiths and denominations. What is the 'Koran' to the Moslems, what is the 'Bible' to the Christians, what is the 'Zend-Avesta' to the Zoroastrians, what is the 'Tripiṭaka' to the Buddhists and what is the 'Talmud' to the Jews, the 'Veda' is to the Hindus. Although the 'Bhagavadgītā' is a 'Smṛti', and therefore not a 'Sruti' or 'Veda', yet the 'Gītā' is recognized, respected and honoured by the adherents of the Eternal Religion as the 'Pañchama Veda' or the

'Fifth Veda', inasmuch as it is replete with the fundamentals and essential principles of Hinduism, visible in the Vedas.

The 'Gītā' is one of the most authoritative books of the Hindus. It is one of the 'Prasthānatraya', i. e., three important books, viz., the 'Gītā,' the Upaniṣads and the Brahma Sūtras, which have been universally accepted by all the orthodox schools of philosophy. And, indeed, in the sacred land of Aryāvarta, no philosophy is perfected or recognized unless it has written its own special commentaries on the 'Prasthānatraya'. The 'Gītā', in fact, is the most fragrant and fascinating bouquet consisting of the sweet and variegated flowers culled from the various plants of Indian philosophy.

In no other religious scriptures of the Hindus do we come across such a grand panoramic view of the domains of Religion, Philosophy and poetry with all their brilliance, beauty and grandeur. No wonder, therefore, that herein is found the highest philosophy of conduct clothed in so simple and alluring verses that a sincere aspirant falls an easy victim to it and moulds and fashions out an enchanting and unique divine character of his own by following in the footsteps of Arjuna, who represented the ordinary soul with all the inherent failings and drawbacks. Besides, this Bible of the Hindus has respected with due honour and faithfully treated all the traditional beliefs and ideals, nay, even the so-called superstitions, and thus has enhanced its own value and thereby has evoked keen admiration and eulogy from all classes of people of the 'Sanātana Dharma'. Moreover, sectarianism with its hybrid monsters, dogmatism, orthodoxy and fanaticism has been exiled and driven out from the boundaries of its own province and, instead, the God of harmony, toleration and catholicity has been worshipped by one and all with deep love and devotion. The 'Gītā' is, indeed, a symphony where everybody sings and plays according to his own tune, but finds out the synthesis and harmony and thus lives in peace, love and amity. Therefore, the 'Gītā' says:—

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥
(IV. 11)

"In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way do I fulfil their desires."

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥
(VII. 21).

"Whatever form a devotee seeks to worship with 'Sraddhā' (faith), that 'Sraddha of his do I make unwavering."

Religion is never meant for the namby-pamby weaklings, but meant for the people who have got the 'muscles of iron and nerves of steel' wherein dwells the gigantic mind. The 'Gītā' raises the indolent from slough of inertia to the pinnacle of activity by bringing home to him the potential divinity of his nature. The hearer of the music of the 'Gītā' cannot remain quiet and stolid; he wakes, if he is sleeping; and, if he is sitting, he stands up; and, if he is standing, he runs and wins the race of life. Such, indeed, is the potency of the "Song Celestial". It is an inexhaustible mine of manliness and strength and consequently the student of the 'Gītā' hears the clarion 'call to arms' of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna:—

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥
(II. 3)

"Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pṛthā: ill doth it become thee; cast of this paltry faint-heartedness and arise, O Scorcher of thine enemies."

The 'Bhagavadgītā' or 'Song Celestial' consists of 700 verses culled from the 'Bhīṣma-Parva' of the Great Epic, 'Mahābhārata', the subject-matter being the stirring and thought-provoking discourses imparted by Srī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra just on the eve of the Great War. The setting is, indeed, dramatic and very interesting. The highest philosophy of life and conduct was preached, not in the closets of the university, nor in the forest retreats of the Himalayas, but in the Flanders of

Kurukṣetra. Whatever might have been the ideas behind the dramatic setting of the 'Gītā', no one can conceal the fact that Srī Arjuna represented the ordinary man, and Srī Kṛṣṇa God Personal and Impersonal, and that 'Kurukṣetra' was no other than 'Karmakṣetra', which is, in fact, 'Dharmakṣetra', where seeds of 'Dharma' are sown and harvests reaped by the sincere seekers after Truth.

The 'Gītā' has very beautifully and faithfully followed in the footsteps of the Vedas, in so far as the teachings are concerned. The teachings have been arranged and divided into three main parts—'Karma' (work), 'Upāsanā' worship) and 'Jñāna' (knowledge), the true import being to lead man ultimately to the Temple of God-vision or 'Mokṣa' or liberation by perfecting the active, emotional and intellectual nature of man. "Man is a complex of reason, will and emotion", writes Sir S. Radhakrishnan in his "Indian Philosophy", "and so seeks the true light of his being through all these. He can reach the end by a knowledge of the Supreme Reality, or by love and adoration of the Supreme Person, or by the subjection of his will to the divine purpose. There is the impulse in him forcing him to get beyond his little self in these different directions. The end is the same, whichever standpoint we adopt. It is the harmonious efficiency of the several sides of our life by which truth is attained, beauty created and conduct perfected. The 'Gitā' is emphatic that no side of conscious life can be excluded. The several aspects reach their fulfilment in the integral divine life. God Himself is Sat, Chit and Ananda,—reality, intelligence and bliss. The Absolute reveals itself to those seeking for knowledge, as the Eternal Light, clear and radiant as the sun at noon-day, in which there is no darkness; to those struggling for virtue, as the Eternal Righteousness, steadfast and impartial; and to those emotionally inclined as Eternal Love and Beauty of Holiness. Even as God combines in Himself wisdom, goodness and holiness, so should men aim at the integral life of spirit. The obstructions of the road are not operative when we reach the end. It is true that in the infinite life of the individual there seems to be some kind of antagonism between contemplation and action. This is only a sign of our imperfection. When Srī Kṛṣṇa is asked about the particular method to be adopted, He clearly says that we need not worry about this question, since the different pathways are not ultimately distinct, but lead to the same goal, and are found together in the end though they cross and recross one another on the road. Man does not function in fractions. Progress is correlated and not dissociated development. Knowledge, feeling and willing are different aspects of the one movement of the soul. ......Madhusūdana Saraswatī considers that the 'Gītā' adopts the three methods indicated in the Upaniṣads, 'Karma' or work, 'Upāsanā' or worship and Jñāna or wisdom, and devotes six chapters to each in succession. Whatever be the truth of it, it emphasises the three great divisions of conscious life. The 'Gītā' recognizes that different men are led to the Spiritual vision by different approaches, some by the perplexities of the moral life, some by the doubts of the intellect, and some by the emotional demands for perfection.

From the Vedic period down to the time prior to the advent of the Great Epic era, the theologians and students of philosophy do not come across a concretised and personified deity unto whom the devotee can pour forth his feelings of love and devotion and enjoy the sweetness of life by getting an easy access to the haven of peace, although, no doubt, there are certain passages, scattered in the ancient sacred lore, full of rapturous states of joy coming in the wake of delving into the ocean of Being, Infinite, Impersonal and Omnipresent. It is only when we come to the 'Mahābhārata' period that we note that the Path of Devotion has been perfected beyond imagination and has been given an equal and legitimate place in the scheme of the religious life. God is impersonal as well as personal, and His personal aspect is the highest reading of the human mind. The 'Gītā' accepts both the aspects of

Divinity and recognizes Srī Kṛṣṇa as the 'Supreme Being'. Besides, this is the first time that it is observed with no little interest that whenever the demons of immorality, injustice and inequality invade the citadel of the cultural and religious life of humanity, God leaves His celestial Kingdom out of infinite love for and mercy towards His children, and lives amongst them as one of them for the protection and preservation of the culture and civilization of the Universe. Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, therefore, boldly declared on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra:—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजांम्यहम् ॥
परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥
(IV. 78)

"Whenever, O descendant of Bharata, there is decline of Dharma (righteousness) and rise of 'Adharma' (unrighteousness), then I body Myself forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of Dharma, I come into being in every age."

It may be said without any fear of contradiction that there is no other country in the world except Bhāratavarṣa (India) which has witnessed the dramas enacted by the numerous philosophers from the rankest materialist of the ilk of Chārvāka to that prince among Unitarians, Srī Sankarāchārya, and it is also noted with great wonder that perhaps there is no other scripture of the Hindus which can claim so many commentaries, Bhāṣyas and Tīkās as the 'Gītā'. It has been stated by a learned soul that he has come across a famous Sannyāsī of the 'Uttarākhaṇḍa' (the Northernmost part of India or the Himalayan region) who has mastered no less than thirty commentaries of the 'Gītā' and has found marvellous interpretations in each of them. It is no wonder that the great commentators, viz., Srī Sankarāchārya, Srī Rāmānujāchārya and Srī Madhvāchārya, have interpreted the 'Gītā' in their own illimitable ways, according to the principles of Monism, Qualified Monism and Dualism. The 'Gītā' is the malleable matter out of which any philosopher can fashion out any figure of his liking by striking the same on the anvil of his mind by the hammer of his intellect at the foundry of his brain. Whatever might have been the purpose of having several commentaries on the 'Gītā', it is admitted on all hands that there is in this marvellous book of the Hindus the grand display of the origin and different stages of development and evolution of philosophical thought. The doctrines of Dualism, Qualified Monism and Monism are visible in their colourful forms in the following verses:—

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोंकार ऋक् साम यजुरेव च ॥
(IX. 17)

"I am the father of this world, the mother, the sustainer, the grandfather; the purifier, the one thing to be known; the syllable OM, and also the 'Ṛgveda', 'Sāmaveda' and 'Yajurveda'."

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥
(XV. 7)

"An eternal portion of Myself has become a living soul in the world of life."

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
(XIII. 16)

"Impartible, yet It exists as if divided in beings."

However divergent may the religious life and the life of ethical virtues be, according to the Westerners, here in India nobody can differentiate between the life of morality and the religious life. Morality, according to the Hindu scripture, is the 'sine qua non' of the religious life; without it the religious life is a misnomer, nay, a contradiction in terms. As a fragrant flower bitten by ants and insects cannot be offered to God, similarly, a body or mind contaminated and soiled by lust, passions and evil desires cannot be accepted by God. Moreover, he who has no control over his senses loses the power of discrimination and sooner or later meets with the shipwreck in life. Therefore Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa warns the aspirant about the terrible consequences of the life of

passions and wants him to curb them in every possible way:—

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनु विधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥
तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

(II. 67, 68)

"For such of the wandering senses in whose wake the mind follows carries away his discrimination, as a wind carries away from its course a boat on the waters. Therefore, O mighty-armed Arjuna, he whose senses are completely restrained from their objects, his mind is stable."

Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak has, in his 'Gītā-Rahasya', described the 'Gītā' as the best treatise on 'Karmayoga', while other learned teachers of Ind have found in it the ocean of 'Vidyā' or knowledge and an inexhaustible store of 'Bhakti' or Devotion. Whatever might be the differences of opinion existing amongst the intellectual souls, it appears to every reader of the 'Gītā' that the "Song Celestial" is replete with verses on 'Karma' and 'Karma' only. Indeed, the central doctrine of the 'Bhagavadgītā' is the attainment of God-vision by the performance of one's own 'Karma'. Man is the bundle of his own Karmas. His present birth has been determined by his past Karmas and the future life, likewise, will be determined by his present action, and thus the wheel of births and deaths continues to move till one has completely exhausted one's Karmas or has burned them to ashes by the fire of knowledge. Inasmuch as knowledge cannot be attained in the twinkling of an eye by feats of magic or spell of charm without a life of rigorous discipline and strenuous 'Sādhana' or spiritual exersises, and inasmuch as devotion is not a commodity that can be purchased by making bargains with the God or Goddess whom one worships, without the chastening of the heart and the breaking down of all the barriers standing in the way of love and purity, man must follow his own particular path of action and, without having an eye on the results of 'Karma', must slowly and steadily direct the barque of his life towards the haven of salvation. 'Karma' breeds 'Karma' so long as there is desire for fruits of action, and consequently Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa advises the 'Karma-yogī' to bring within himself the spirit of 'Niṣkāmatva' (non-attachment).

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

(II. 47)

"Thy right is to work only, but never to the fruits thereof. Be thou not the producer of the fruits of thy actions; neither let thy attachment be towards inaction."

This is undoubtedly the keynote of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa's teachings to Arjuna. However, if he finds it too difficult to tread the path of desirelessness, let him surrender himself with all the thoughts and actions wholly and completely at the sacred feet of Srī Bhagavān in consonance with His memorable teaching, nay, His command:—

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

(IX. 27)

"Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest away, whatever austerity thou practisest, O son of Kuntī, do that as an offering unto Me." Srī Bhagavān is, indeed, the greatest friend of man and knows full well his inherent drawbacks, and consequently advises His children never to allow indolence, lethargy and hypocrisy to enter the citadels of their hearts. Action even with desire is always preferable to inaction, where inaction with 'Vāsanā' or

desire brings fresh fetters of bondage. Hence the 'Gītā' opines:—

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान् विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥

(III. 6)

"He who, restraining the organs of action, sits revolving in the mind thoughts regarding objects of senses, he, of deluded understanding, is called a hypocrite. But who, controlling the senses by the mind unattached, directs the organs of action to the path of work, he, O Arjuna, excels."

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।

"Do thou perform obligatory action, for action is superior to inaction."

However caustic might be the various views of the antagonistic people who find everyting Hindu nauseating and galling, and however callous might be the so-called scientifice minds, the Hindu scriptures are pre-eminently practical. The main purpose of the sacred scriptures is to train up the human mind and then take it step by step to the highest rung of realization. The 'Gītā', the compendium of the Hindu scriptures, therefore, advises the aspirants to follow their special paths in accordance with their tendencies and inclinations and, nothing daunted at the failures and drawbacks that appear at the currents and cross-currents of life, to plod on till the Divinity, the birth-right of every being, is attained. As the Pāṇḍavas with their limited resources and equipments gained victory over the Kauravas, so the virtuous aspect of man vanquishes the viler one and asserts its independence in fullness of time. Such, indeed, is the ennobling effect of the 'Gītā' on the life of the individuals. It gives them infinite hope and courage and never discourages them even at their staggering failures in life. It says:—"हतो वा प्राप्स्यासि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।— Dying thou gainest heaven; conquering thou enjoyest the earth." The 'Gītā' is the healing balm to the wounded mind, the constant companion and inspiring guide to the 'Sādhaka', the staff to the hero and solace and consolation to the soul in sack-cloth and ashes.

The student of the 'Gītā' with little faith is rarely benefited by its study. The only way to derive the greatest benefit from the 'Gītā' is to have adamantine faith—the faith or 'Sraddhā' which made Nachiketā enter the kingdom of King Yama, Mahāvīra cross the ocean and Prahlāda stand calm, collected and composed before the fiery ordeals of tortures. Blessed is the soul on whom has dawned the burning faith— faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa and His memorable words; for he, indeed, will, in fullness of time, attain the 'summum bonum' of life. During his itinerary days in South India, Srī Chaitanya Deva came across a devotee soul at Sri Rangam, who had been going through the 'Bhagavadgītā' and simultaneously committing innumerable mistakes, and yet tears of joy had been rolling down his cheeks. Lord Chaitanya Deva asked, "How is it, my friend, that your chanting is brisling with errors and yet your cheek is bathed in tears ?" "Revered Sir", replied the devotee, "I do not know any grammar or the science of metre, nor am I well-versed in Devabhāṣā; but the moment I open the pages of the 'Gītā', Lord Kṛṣṇa appears before me with all His grandeur and beauty and this causes me shed tears of joy". Indeed, such devotion and faith is the only criterion by which our study of the 'Gītā' is to be judged.

The most controversial question which has, as it were, baffled the gigantic endeavours of the research scholars is the historicity of the 'Gītā'. The author of the 'Gītā', nay, the 'Māhābhārata' is Vyāsa. Vyāsa is merely a title, and consequently it is well-nigh impossible to discern whether Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa or Dwaipāyana Vyāsa or some other Vyasa is the most authentic author. Then again, there is a current belief amongst the certain advanced section of the Hindus that it is Srī Sankarā-

chārya, the propounder of the Monistic Doctrine, who composed the verses and foisted them in the body of the 'Mahābhārata'. Besides, the central figure of the "Song Celestial", Bhagavān Vāsudeva, has been painted in very many colours in several sacred books. In the 'Chhāndogya Upaniṣad' He is potrayed as the son of Devakī and the disciple of sage Ghora, while the 'Mahābhārata' describes Him as the King of Dwarka; the Viṣṇupurāṇa, on the other hand, has made Him, the Cowherd Boy playing with the Gopīs in Brindaban. Here also the historical explanation about the hero is not available. And, last but not the least, the Kurukṣetra War is a stupendous enigma and may, at best, be called a fine feat of phantasmagoria; in fact, in the history of Ancient India no mention is made about the War between the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas at the battle-field of Kurukṣetra, through, no doubt, one meets with, in the pages of history, the Great War waged between the Kurus and the Pāñchālas. Some are of opinion that the Kurukṣetra War is merely an allegory, showing the tremendous conflict—conflict between virtue and vice—that is eternally going on within every human being. In this connection we are reminded of the heated discussion that passed between Sri Ramakrishna Deva and his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda, whilom Narendranath, regarding the historicity of Srī Kṛṣṇa and the historical background of the Rāsalīlā. Narendranath was then a rationalist of the highest calibre and would not accept anything, however appealing to the mind, unless that could satisfy his intellect. While the discussion was running high and both were at the parting of ways, Sri Ramakrishna Deva at once struck another note on the topic and said, "Whatever you may say, Narendra, about the non-existence of Srī Kṛṣṇa, you cannot deny the fact that the blessed Soul through whose mind these divine ideas crossed, lived as Srī Kṛṣṇa for the time being." As a matter of fact, the teachings of the 'Gītā' are firmly based on the most perfect psychology. Although thousands of years have flowed down the stream of time without our cognisance since the 'Mahābhārata' era and although tremendous waves of revolutions, cultural, social and political, have passed over the different nations, throwing the societies and institutions into the welter of chaos and disorder with the efflux of time, the 'Gītā' has preserved its special teachings in their pristine purity, giving life and succour to millions of souls suffering from the pangs of bereavements, ailments, privations and penury.

The 'Bhagavadgītā' is a vast ocean of nectar, a drop of which is puissant enough to make man forget the ephemeral world and lose him fully in infinite bliss. The 'Gītā' is impartial like the affectionate mother, whose love and affection showers on all her children without knowing any difference, however wide may be the gulf of difference in so far as their individual attainments are concerned. Hence it would, indeed, be the height of glory, if we can translate one or more of its teachings in our every-day life and thereby attain the mine of immortality, bliss and knowledge.

Characteristics of a Yogi.

That which is the night for all beings, for the disciplined man is the time of waking; when other beings are waking, then is night for the *Muni* who seeth. (The Sage is awake to things over which the ordinary man sleeps, and the eyes of the Sage are open to truths shut out from the common vision; while *vice versa* that which is real for the masses is illusion for the sage.)

(*Gītā. II. 69*)

Bhagavan Shri Krishna.

Devotion to a Personal God in the Gita.

By "Sri Krishna-Sharana".

The Divine Song, the Gītā, is the Divine Message of no lesser personality than that of the Supreme Lord, the Sachchidānanda Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself. There is no knowledge in the world that could be a match for it. People of all classes are welcome to it and to them here are open according to their capacities the easiest and the most convenient ways leading to the attainment of the Divine. All the important ways that lead to the Divine are here distinctly marked and all are mutually helpful, none contradicting the other. It is a vast synthetic movement which no other work has the boldness and richness to offer. Action, Devotion and Knowledge, the three great doctrines of spiritual living, have been dealt with here in a manner full of liberality and perfection, and purity and a straightforward harmonious practicability, at once appealing to the heart both in its inner significance and outer appearance. This is a beauty rare, not to be found elsewhere. Each and every man can have his own way out of the several here, according to his natural inclinations and choice and can by that way reach his highest goal. The Gītā, to our mind, is "the philosophy of divine life in the perfect knowledge, full of devotion to and desireless action for the Lord." It serves as a protector and helper, guide, illuminator and sustainer for all the practical needs of those who follow one or the other way to the Divine. With each and every practice of Yoga in the Gītā, certain precautions or otherwise remedial measures have been suggested and these, if acted up to, dispel all inherent defects and the practice of the Yoga becomes purified and fruitful. And therefore the Action of the Gītā, the Knowledge of the Gītā, the Meditation of the Gītā and the Devotion of the Gītā, are all perfectly free from all sins, impurities and imperfections. None of them allows any loop-hole in it.

The Lord out of love towards Arjuna gave him the divine power of seeing and showed to him His formidable cosmic form. Arjuna was appalled to see that all-devouring, terrible face and, troubled with fear, prayed to the Lord to show him the same intimate face as before. The Lord assumed the four-armed shape and then showed to him His human, peaceful and delightful (for all tastes and likings) Srī Kṛṣṇa's form of violet hue, and all his fears were dispelled and restlessness set at rest. On this the Lord praised Arjuna's love that he bore to Him and said, "The many faces and forms of Mine that thou hast seen with thine eyes can be seen, understood and entered into only by single-minded devotion." Then the characteristics of single-minded devotion and, as the end in view, its culmination in the union with the Divine have been explained. Here the eleventh chapter ends. Arjuna has already heard something of both the Manifest and the Unmanifest aspects of the Divine and has come to know that the devotees of either of the two aspects reach the highest status. And now he wants to have a decisive statement from the Master on the point and therefore in fittingly humble words asks:—

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥

(Gita. XII. 1)

"O Lord, those single-minded devotees who, in the way You have told, with their minds fixed in You, constantly adore You in Your manifest charming violet appearance and form, and those who adore the everlasting सत् (Existence) चित् (Knowledge) and आनन्द (Bliss) in unmanifest Intensity, which of these are the best knowers of the Yoga?" The question is clearly put. Arjuna means to say, "You told me Your manifest form to be rare and viewable, knowable and

enterable only by absolute devotion, which, too, you have explained. But you have on several occasions before bestowed great praise on the devotees of the Unmanifest. Now tell me, therefore, decisively which of these two classes of the devotees is the greater. The Lord replied:—

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥

(Gita. XII.2)

"Those who in Me, the Manifest Divine, found their mind, and with never failing supreme faith live in constant devotion to Me, to My mind, they are the most perfect Yogīs." The reply, too, is as clear as the question. The Lord says: "Those who, in the way I have told, with an ever concentrated mind in Me adore Me with supreme faith, I hold them to be the most perfect."

The 'त्वां'(Thee) of the former Sloka and 'मां' (Me) of the Slatter refer to the Divine in manifestation and not unmanifest Brahma. For, the following verses vividly describe the adoration of the Unmanifest, and the indeclinable 'तु' entirely separates these from the preceding verses. This clearly proves that, in the judgment of Srī Bhagavān, devotees of the manifest Brahma are the most perfect Yogīs, and the concluding Sloka of the eleventh chapter assures for them the attainment of the Divine. But none need infer from that that the adoration of the unmanifest Brahma is of a lower order, or that this class of devotees do not reach the Divine. To dispel all such deluding ignorance, the Lord Himself says:—

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥
संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

(Gita XII. 3-4)

"Those who by controlling all their senses and possessed of an equal mind everywhere and engaged delightfully in doing good to all creatures adore constantly the unthinkable, all-pervading, indefinable, ineffable, everlasting, immobile, unmanifest, immutable Brahma, they, too, come to Me."

These passages decisively point out the one and the same objective realizable by either of the two ways. What on earth, then, could give a preference to the devotees of the Manifest over those of the Unmanifest ? Was it a fiat of the Lord ? Or was it an impetus to effect a perfection of the process of the Manifest-adoration, intended for the seekers of a lesser understanding ? Was it an engaging praise directed only to infuse enthusiasm in them ? Or was it, in view of the very limited capability of Arjuna, who could in that view be nothing more than a seeker after the Divine in manifestation, intended only for Arjuna and for the time when that utterance came forth from the Lord ? What the Lord intended is best known to the Lord Himself, but the view that presses itself on our mind is that what the Lord has said is a truth and nothing but truth. We cannot conceive of anything other than a truth in His utterance. He has neither praised one nor cursed the other. Why He should have extolled the devotee of the Divine in manifestation He himself explains in the subsequent verse:—

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥

(Gita. XII. 5)

"Those whose mind is drawn towards the Unmanifest, but whose heart is engrossed by the physical ego, for them to fix their mind on the Unmanifest Brahma and adore It is a painful struggle; to realize, in fact, the Unmanifest for embodied souls is really a hard ascent."

The Divine in manifestation has for us a firm ground to stand on and rise upwards on our path of Yoga, while the seeker after the Unmanifest has to sail without the sailor on the high seas. In this endless ocean of becoming, to

keep our ship unaffected by the raging waves of desires of sense-objects and to keep it safe from the sweeping storm of worldly enjoyments, and with a fixed eye on our destination, and sail the ship to it without compass, without a sailor, without any help, is really a very hard struggle. Then look at the other way:—

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥
तेषामहं समुद्धर्त्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥

(Gita XII. 6-7)

"Those who make Me their sweetest abode, their dearest destination, their only refuge, their greatest and their highest goal, and thus surrender all their actions to Me, and, with a single, unreserved and unrefractory Yoga and with Me always in their mind, adore Me, them, My loving devotees, I deliver swiftly out of the sea of death". They are neither to fear the surging waves of the endless sea nor be afraid of the ship being wrecked or themselves being drowned by the furious storm dashing against. Their only part in the affair is to take their seat, safe in the beautiful unwreckable ship covered over by My grace, and, with all their mind, body and life, look at Me and be delighted to see My Divine doings and be merged in the sweet tunes of My flute. I shall be the sailor of their ship and before long (नचिरात्), that is, in this very life, shall sail their ship to the highest bliss beyond the sea of mortal nature.

Whoever knows the Divine to be an endless treasure of infinite knowledge and a fountain-spring of all forces and energies and the absolute sanction of all power, lordship and wealth, and a boundless ocean and flood of Love and Beauty and Ananda, and holds firmly the faith in His word and admits Him to his heart as the sole navigator of his ship, he among men is the happiest and the most fortunate devotee, and that he gets his ship without the least effort across the otherwise endless sea, leaves no doubt. He can entertain no fear of the ship being wrecked or broken or foundered, for he bears no burden of responsibility of sailing the ship, on his shoulders, nor has he the least doubt in the fact of his swiftly reaching the shores across.

To cross the sea of death is not foreign even to the devotee of the Unmanifest Immutable, but the way he follows is a narrow and a difficult one. The objective being the same in both cases, the preference given in one case over the other has only one inference, and that is the convenience, the ready accessibility of one course in contrast with the other; and, if that is the mind of the Lord behind this utterance, it is, humanly speaking, what it should have been. But that is not all. Narrow or broad, convenient or inconvenient, difficult or easy, that is only about the way. Why should it make a difference in the two devotees, as perfect and less perfect? The devotee of the Manifest has been extolled not only as a good or a better knower but the best of the knowers of Yoga. A trifling matter of convenience only could not have determined the degree of knowledge in the knowers of the Yoga. So there must be something deeper and essential as the basis of this differentiation, which we must find out.

It is true that the devotee of the Unmanifest, in the end, reaches the Divine, i. e., after treading the whole way and completing the voyage. But, with the devotee of the Manifest, the case is different. From the very beginning he is on his way, joined to Divine. He sees Srī Bhagavān in form with all His charm that casts its spell over the triple world. The devotee of the Unmanifest takes for his voyage the ship of the great word of knowledge "अहंब्रह्मास्मि" (I am the Brahma). Now, if he could escape or else successfully overcome the evil influences of his ego and the desire for popularity and other desires and impulses of lower nature, he proceeds further along the way and thus after a strenuous labour and hard struggle reaches beyond the sea of death.

But the devotee of the Manifest Divine takes for his voyage the ship of the Grace of the Lord, and the Lord Himself sails the ship. As soon as he boards the ship, he gets the fellowship of the sailor Srī Kṛṣṇa. Across the sea, however, both find themselves in an equal state of 'Ananda'; but the greatness and the wisdom of the devotee of a Personal God lies in the fact that he is from the very beginning at every step with the Lord, and at every step he is thrilled to see and experience in the face and form of Srī Kṛṣṇa in His boundless compassion and transcendental universal charm, ever a new sweetness, a new charm. He hears His sweet voice, the sweet notes of His all-enrapturing divine flute. He sees His beautiful, powerful and wonderful deeds. The devotee himself does nothing, rests firmly assured and only sees the Divine Līlā and is thrilled to an engrossing delight. Not only that. He sees carefully whither and how and in what direction the Lord sails the ship, and learns thus the art of crossing the sea of death and taking others across. Because he has now learnt the art of crossing the otherwise endless sea, the Lord gives him the right to dwell in His Blissful Abode; and, when the time and the need arrives, He sends this devotee back to the world of mortal nature on the divine mission of lifting up the world, as His own skilful servant or Instrument or Agent doing the work as a part allotted to him in the great Līlā of delivering and blessing and doing good to the world. Such master-men that have attained this status descend into the world as executive agents of the Lord.

But the devotees of the Unmanifest Brahma after attaining the highest bliss are liberated, and they merge and lose themselves in the Unmanifest Brahma, whence they cannot return. Neither on the way to the highest bliss do they have the delight of being with, looking at or speaking and listening to the Lord, nor they are confided with ony participation as skilful navigators in the work of the great Līlā here in this vast sea of mortal nature. यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह—all their powers of word with the mind leave them (the devotees of the Unmanifest) there in the abode of perfect bliss and themselves come back. They, too, as eye-witnesses, depose that the way to that highest Unmanifest is full of painful difficulties. They describe the several hard and painful experiences, which people tremble to hear. They speak what they have seen and experienced; for they have been therein and seen that thorny way. What else can they do ? For they never saw the enrapturing love of the loving face of the beautiful blue and violet radiance, Srī Kṛṣṇa, they had not that rare fortune of tasting the immortal nectar of His beauty. How could they ever describe the taste of that divine delight ?

On the other hand, the devotees of a Personal God keep their liberation as trust with the infinite treasure of the Lord, and with the blessing command of the Lord come back to the material world, and, while ever living in the ocean of Divine delight and even conscious of their physical existence, absolutely concentrate their mind on the blessing and captivating form and face in manifestation of the Lord, and take up all those who consecrate their actions to the Lord on their ships and sail them across the sea of mortality. One may here contend that, as the devotees of the Unmanifest are deprived of the delight of seeing Srī Bhagavān face to face and of enjoying His Līlā, so must be the devotees of the Manifest deprived of the other delight, i. e., the delight of the Bliss in the Unmanifest Brahma. But that is not the case. The knowledge of the Truth that the devotees of the Unmanifest get by the force of their strenuous labour is to the loving devotees of the Manifest revealed by the Divine grace. The story of the devotee prince Dhruva is well-known. Dhruva was devoted to the Lord in manifestation. He wanted to see the "lotus-eyed" Nārāyaṇa with his eyes. Drawn by sheer force of his love, Srī Nārāyaṇa openly appeared before him and by a touch of His divine conch on his cheek gave him in an instant the highest knowledge. This clearly proves that the knowledge of the Truth, the objective of the devotees of the Unmanifest, is secured also to the devotees of the Manifest, and over and

above it the latter get the 'Ananda' of the Divine Līlā in the manifestation, as also that 'Ananda' they distribute to all by word of mouth. They know both the aspects of the Truth and delight in them and can describe them to others, and therefore it is that the Lord has said that they are the best knowers of Yoga—of union with Me.

This is actually the fact. Without love it is impossible to unearth the truths lying hidden in the deep Mystery. To illustrate, there is a king with a minister and also another private servant who loves the king and is in his confidence. The minister has got all powers of administration. He supervises all State departments and carries on the administration; but with all his high position and responsibility he has no means to know the secrets of the king's mind or to be with him in his inner apartments or while he is at play or in bed, at dinner or other routine which has nothing to do with the State, although every business of the State is being carried on in consultation with him. On the other hand, this servant friend of the king, who has no direct and apparent hand in the governance of the State, doesgive his opinion on every question that comes before the king, in private when the king seeks it. The king opens the secret vaults of his heart before him and says to himself, "This my loving friend is to me no less valuable in any case than the minister himself. Ministerial power lies at his feet and could be given to him any moment if he so wished. When I myself am 'his', what is there in the ministry to be still wished for ?" Neither the loving friend is after it nor the king finds it convenient to instal him there; for, once installed in that high place, he will have to abide by the conventions of his position and shall not be available when the king needs him most. By making him his minister, the king is afraid, he would lose a friend whom he needs always and everywhere, for he is a loving and beloved friend of the king.

The king in the illustration is our Divine Lord, the Minister the devotee of the Unmanifest Brahma, and the loving friend the beloved devotee of the Lord. The devotee of the Unmanifest is the man of position and responsibility, but he is not the intimate friend of the king (the Lord); he is not in intimate touch with His mind in the Līlā and therefore deprived of that 'Ananda'. But the beloved devotee is the king's own servant and in full confidence of the king, and is thus a servant of the State also. Therefore the devotees of the Manifest Divine are not after liberation, they always beg of Him a service at His feet and in that and in their participation in the Divine Līlā they are delighted. Really great are they for whom the Unmanifest manifests Himself, for they know both the Manifest and the Unmanifest aspects of God. They know their Rāma, their Kṛṣṇa, in the Unmanifest aspect, to be pervasive of all existences, and yet they worship Him as Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, with his bow and arrow, and the highest water-mark of human conduct in human form; or they worship Him as their sweet Kṛṣṇa with His enchanting flute, and merge themselves in the highest delight. Goswami Tulasidas says, therefore, that the Unmanifest aspect is very easy to realize while none knows the "Manifest." * Thus those who know the Unmanifest with the Manifest are the 'best knowers' (योगवित्तम)'.

Now let us see what form of the Personal God the Gītā shows to us and what the mode of living and the way of devotion of His devotees.

The Personal God in the Gītā is not an one-sided or limited Bhagavān. He is both in the Unmanifest and the Manifest. Those devotees of the Lord who limit their God, make their own Lord a smaller entity. The Lord of the Gītā is not limited within an idol, a name or a place of worship. He is all Existence and Consciousness and Knowledge and Bliss. He is perfect and eternal, without a beginning or an end. He is unborn and immutable and equally, pervasive of all existences He is the omnipotent Creator, living in

* निरगुन रूप सुलभ अति, सगुन न जाने कोय।

the hearts of all. He is intensely compassionate and friendly, generous and loving and beautiful and valiant. He enjoys all and all are His Creations. He is the Lord. He, though seeming to be born, is unborn; though putting on a form in manifestation, is unmanifest; and, while descending in form into one place or many places at one and the same time is ever and everywhere and in every way present in His infinite power. He is present in the temple and its idol and its walls, in the worship and the offerings in worship and the worshipper; He is present within and without in all places and times. He enacts His Līlā in manifested form along with His Bhaktas and in His unmanifested aspect is, as water in ice, every where pervasive—

'मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना'—'By Me, the unmanifested Divine, is this whole universe pervaded'. We can see and call Him, the intensely compassionate Lord, in any of His many forms and names. Bearing this truth in mind, we can adore Him as the Brahma, the Supreme Spirit, the Supreme Bliss, or, we may, if we like, worship Him as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, or Maheśa, or as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Sakti (Mother), Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, or even as Arhant or Buddha, Allah, God or Jehova or in any other form and name. When by force of love and adoration and by His responsive grace His real nature is seen and known, all doubts automatically cease to exist. Not knowing this truth, the ignorant mind is tempted to create limitations within which he would see His Lord. But the Lord Himself has said:—

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन्।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥

(Gita IV. 6)

"Although I am unborn, imperishable in My self-existence, and the Lord of all beings, yet I assume birth by a supreme resort to the action of My nature and by the force of My Māyā."

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥

(Gita VII. 24)

"The ignorant look upon Me, the formless, as bound in form, not knowing My imperishable transcendent Supreme Presence."

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम्।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥

(Gita IX. 11)

"Not intimate with this Supreme presence of Mine, the ignorant do not know Me in fact, as I am, in this human form, the Supreme Lord of all existences."

These verses clearly point out that the Lord of the Gītā, manifest in nature and form though formless, unmanifest, unborn and imperishable, appears in human and other forms and faces to perform His various divine deeds for the uplift of the Universe. In short, such is the manifest God whom the Gītā teaches to adore.

Now let us see the mode of living of the devotee of a Personal God, as indicated in the Gītā. To be sure, he is not a man of deranged mind, of foolish notions or of vain glories. He is not an evil-doer, a cunning or a deceitful fellow. He is not given to grief or sloth or dullness or inaction. He is not overpowered by joy or grief, nor is he addicted to vices. He is neither cruel nor greedy. He is not desirous of the fruit of his labour, nor is attached to worldly enjoyments. For, sin has not the least chance to enter into him. He dedicates his 'I'ness and 'My'ness to his Divine Lord, who is dearest to him, and is fearless, secure, equal in gain and loss, innocent, averse to sense objects, ready to abolish the ego, ever cheerful, delighiful to serve others, patience and enthusiasm personified, dutiful and without attachment. Speaking of adoration of the Manifest in its results, and the greatness to which the devotee reaches, the Lord in short has said of him that, whatever he does, does for the Divine, accepts the Lord as his only Supreme resort, devotes himself absolutely to the Lord, has no attachment with worldly things, is friendly towards all existences, has his mind concentrated in

perfect faith on the Lord and consecrates all his actions to the Lord and constantly seeks in thought and meditation the Lord only. (Gītā. XI. 55; XII. 2, 6, 7) This, then, is the mode of living of the devotee of the Manifest, in the Gītā. Then, in the last eight verses of the twelfth chapter, the Lord has described the signs of the perfected devotees of the Manifest.

Now, as regards the way of adoration or worship. It is mainly devotional. The distinguishing character of the devotion to the Manifest as from the devotion to the Unmanifest is twofold—the aspect of the Lord and the attitude of the dovotee. The seeker after the Unmanifest regards himself to be one with the Brahma and says 'अहं ब्रह्मास्मि' (I am the Brahma); while the seeker after the Manifest sees the Lord manifested in all forms and says "वासुदेवः सर्वमिति" (All this is Vāsudeva). For adoration, there is no material basis for the former; while for the latter the material basis for adoration is the charming ideal form of the manifest Divine. The former looks upon the world as a dream of non-existing things, while the latter looks upon it as the delightful play (लीला) of the Lord. The former treads his way self-reliant, while the latter moves in the grace of the Lord. Knowledge is the former's main support; of the latter, love. Knowledge and love, however, found themselves in both, according to their seekings. The devotee of the Unmanifest thinks that he is not acting, the qualities of nature are acting in themselves, in reality it is all nothing. The devotee of the Manifest thinks that the Lord is acting with him as a tool in His hand, the doer and the enjoyer is He. Whatever I do is inspired and worked out by His power; the very existence of his depends on His will. With this outlook before him he knows that his only duty is to seek the Lord in thought and deed, within and without, here and everywhere. He does not bother about as to what the Lord is getting or will get me to do. He gives up his mind and intellect to Him and is all secure. He abides by the Lord's word:—

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥

(Gita. VIII. 7)

"Therefore do thou always remember Me and fight. By surrendering thy intellect and mind to Me, thou wilt undoubtedly enter into Me."

This way of devotion has no place for pretence, vanity, desire, excitement, covetousness, false sense of prestige, falsehood and delusion. The devotee is free from all these evils and, with the Lord in front, moves in the world of beings and becomings, and is ever busy in hearing of the names and virtues and powers and secrets of the Lord and describing them to others and thinking and meditating and delighting in them and singing hymns to the Lord, Offering hymns and prayers to the Lord is his first concern but he does not turn his back on his other duties, and the work that he is rightly called upon to do, he does fearlessly and patiently for the Lord. His only desire and care that he reserves to himself is that he should never act in a manner that would displease his Lord. He lives in the spirit that he is the Lord's beloved servant, and the Lord is his all that he should serve. He is ever grateful to the Lord for having accepted his service and, while remaining as He is in his unveiled Infinitude, having come down before him in a manifested form for his fulfilment. With faith he constantly remembers Him and does all work appointed to him. At the end of the sixth chapter, such a devoted Yogī has been called the best Yogī:—

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥

(Gita. VI. 47)

"Even among the Yogīs themselves, he is the best, in my judgment, who in faith and with mind devoted to Me ever yearns in prayer for Me."

The significant words 'with faith' and 'with the mind fixed on Me' again occur in

the second verse of the twelfth chapter, as 'श्रद्धया परयोपेताः' (in perfected faith) 'मय्यावेश्य मनः' (with mind entered into Me), the change laying a certain emphasis on the necessity of firm and supreme faith. The word 'युक्ततम' (the best Yogī), in both the verses, is the same. Devotion to the Manifest consists of singing hymns to the Lord and knowledge of His Manifest and unmanifest reality, meditation, offering of all actions and leaving the fruit of all actions to Him. The devotee of the Manifest does not care even for liberation without the Lord. This way of practising knowledge and meditation and leaving the fruit of all action to the Divine leads him to perfect peace, and the highest status of the Supreme. The substance has been made clear in the twelfth verse—

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छांतिरनंतरम् ॥

"Knowledge is better than the practice of a method without the knowledge of the truth behind; better than that is a silent and complete concentration on the Lord, but the best is the giving up of the fruit of one's works, which includes practice, knowledge and concentration. Such a renunciation of fruit is followed by perfect peace."

The intervening verses between 8 to 11 deal with the four means: concentration and practice and work for the Lord and giving up of fruit to the Lord. One may choose according to his capacity. None of these is greater or smaller than the other. One who includes all is the best. He is the perfect devotee. The highest perfection that such a devotee may reach is described in certain of its attributes in the succeeding eight verses to the end of the chapter. Those are a spontaneous bearing of a perfected devotee and are an ideal for those on the path. This, then, is the truth of devotion to a Personal God in the Gītā.

None need infer from this that devotion to the Unmanifest Immutable is of a lower order or that the mode of living there is something peculiarly different. In fact, devotion to the Unmanifest stands on a very high level. Only those mastermen who are ascetic in their habits, unswerving, bold and brave, and possessed of self-mastery can set their feet on this thorny path. The way of devotion, too, is not altogether different, excepting one or two features. It is essentially incumbent on the devotee of a Personal God that he should be 'सर्वभूतेषु निर्वैरः', without enmity to all beings and becomings, and also 'मैत्रः करुण एव च' be friendly and compassionate; and for the devotee of a Impersonal God the condition laid down is that he should be 'सर्वभूतहिते रतः'—engaged in doing good to all existenees. The former has to concentrate his mind on God, and the latter also has to fully master his senses. The former has to repose supreme faith in the Lord, and the latter, too, has to be 'equal-minded' in seeing the 'Brahma' everywhere.

Really speaking, the Lord Himself knows what in reality He is and what the import of His Divine Voice in the verses of the Gītā. The great souls who have the grace of the Lord can also get a glimpse of the truth lying hidden in this fathomless ocean of knowledge. None other can. What can a man like me, rolling in this mortal nature, know of these great truths? Whatever I have here stated is only a morsel food, a favour from the great revered souls. I honour and revere those great souls also, ancient or modern, whom I may happen to differ with in this connection. I have not written a word to offend what they have said. The fact is that the opinion I have here expressed is dear to me and this may possibly be due to my taste and my attachment to it. I am, however, a humble servant of the servants of all saints, begging the dust of their feet.

(*Kalyan*)

Sadhana According to the Gita.

By Pandit Bhawani Shanker.

1. INTRODUCTORY.

According to the teachings of Srīmad Bhagavadgītā, there are four principal modes of spiritual discipline or 'Sādhana', all of which have to be practised in due order of succession. The first in order is known as 'Karmayoga' or 'Yoga' by way of 'Karma', an exposition of which is given in the earlier chapters of the 'Gītā', and more particularly in the third. The second stage is that of 'Abhyāsayoga' (or 'Yoga' by way of 'Abhyāsa' or purification and control of mind), an elucidation of which will be found in the sixth chapter. In the opinion of some, 'Abhyāsayoga' is included in 'Karmayoga'. The third stage is that of 'Jñānayoga' or 'Yoga' by way of 'Jñāna', as described in the fourth chapter. The fourth and last of the stages is what is called 'Bhaktiyoga' or 'Yoga' by way of 'Bhakti' or devotion, as expounded in the twelfth chapter.

2. KARMAYOGA.

To begin with, the 'Sādhaka' or follower on the spiritual path must accustom himself to do 'Niṣkāma' (unselfish) work. This means that he has first of all to learn to perform actions with a sense of duty, renouncing for himself all fruits thereof, so that whether he succeeds or fails he may remain unmoved; but in no case should he give up action. In this connection the reader is invited to look up Chapter II. 47-48 and Chapter VI. 1 of the 'Gītā'. In this way, by means of action done without a sense of personal attachment, the 'Chitta', i. e., the faculty of mind becomes more and more purified, that is to say, gets purged of the personal taint, the taint of self-gratification. Then, when the 'Chitta' has made sufficient advance towards self-purification, it begins to dawn upon the 'Sādhaka' or the spiritual aspirant that, while all living beings are and remain individual units, still each forms a part of 'Viśva-Virāṭ', the Great Universal Whole. That being so, the understanding grows upon him that all living beings are deeply interrelated and therefore interdependent, that is to say, dependent upon one another for mutual support ('Gītā' III. 10). And we find that God Himself, as the Divine Teacher, is always engaged in activities in a disinterested spirit and solely for the welfare of 'Viśva', the Universal Whole ('Gītā' III. 22). At this stage the 'Sādhaka' realizes that the spirit of selfishness is opposed to the Divine Purpose. He feels, therefore, impelled to enter on a career of activity directly intended to promote the world's good (III. 20, 25). In the category of such work fall the making of charitable gifts to the deserving, providing medical relief for the sick, and supporting the destitute and the needy, and so on. At this stage, however, the worker on the Path finds himself confronted with a subtle danger. For, while thus engaged in the doing of good deeds, he begins to experience within himself a longing for name and fame, for position and self-aggrandisement. And the reason for it is that the thought of doing good to others, now filling his mind, naturally tends to rouse his 'Abhimāna' or feeling of egotism. Thus, when these subtler forms of selfish desire make their appearance within oneself, even altruism becomes a source of bondage to the doer. Therefore, it becomes necessary in the next or the final stage of 'Karmayoga' for the' Sādhaka' to learn to perform all work in the spirit of 'Yajña,' i. e., of sacrifice offered to Srī Bhagavān. When it is so offered in a devout spirit, the fruit of the 'Yajña' is accepted and appropriated by the Lord Himself for the promotion of the welfare of all created existence. For, the truth is that He Himself is the 'Bhoktā' or Sole enjoyer of all 'Yajña' (Gītā V. 29). The well-known five forms of 'Mahāyajña' (as laid down in the Dharmaśāstras) must be reckoned as

coming under this supreme category (of 'Yājñika Karma') which, in fact, constitutes the true 'Mahāyajña,' or 'Yajña' in the highest sense.

3. ABHYASAYOGA.

Control of the mind (मनोनिग्रह) is only possible when the mind and the mind-plane or 'Chitta' have undergone a radical process of purification by way of 'Karma-Yoga.' The main reason why so many persons fail in spite of great efforts to control their minds is that they did not have their 'Chitta' purified in the first instance by undergoing a course of Karmayoga. Indeed, the chief means of gaining control over the mind are 'Abhyāsa' (repeated efforts) and the cultivation of 'Vairāgya', which is the spirit of non-attachment to and renunciation of the fruits of action done by oneself (Gītā VI. 35). Several external modes of 'Abhyāsa' adopted for effecting mind-control have been discussed in this connection. Among them are the following two, namely, 'Prāṇāyāma' or the regulation of out-going and in-coming breaths, ('Gītā' IV. 29) and 'Lakṣyayoga' (लक्ष्ययोग) or looking fixedly at the tip of the nose or any such other spot ('Gītā' VI. 13).* But the more excellent way to gain control over the mind would be to pursue the following course. First the impulses born of 'Kāma' (i. e. selfish or personal desires) should be abandoned. Then the centrifugal or outward-going tendencies of the senses have to be turned inwards. After this, the flow of thoughts emanating from the 'Chitta' or mind-plane shall have to be held in check by the restraining power of 'Buddhi' or the Higher discriminating Reason. The next step would be to make the 'Chitta' rest in the 'Jīvātmā,' i. e, the individual soul which abides in the 'Kāraṇa-Sarīra' (the finest causal vehicle), but in such a way that no thought should arise (through the working of the 'Chitta') —vide 'Gītā' VI.24-25. Therefore, whenever the unsteady 'Chitta' is found to wander away from the 'Jivātmā' (individual self) as the centre, it has to be brought back and made to rest again in the 'Jīvātmā' (VI. 26).*

Such repeated efforts to attain the one-pointedness or fixedness of the 'Chitta' constitute 'Abhyāsa' truly so called. But the supreme form of 'Abhyāsa' consists in the ability to fix the 'Chitta' not on the 'Jīvātmā' but on Bhagavān Himself instead. (VI. 14). For, of all those who practise 'Yoga,' the highest ones are they who having surrendered their inmost soul to Bhagavān, worship Him with devotion. The devotee who practises such soul-surrendering 'Abhyāsa' experiences the feeling of being at one with all created beings. In that way, having come to realize as his own the sorrows and sufferings of others, he sets about trying to remove them by such means as are open to him (VI. 29—32.). When the 'Chitta' has achieved some sort of fixity or concentration through the practice of 'Prāṇāyāma,' 'Lakṣyayoga' and the like, one may come to acquire some little wonderful (psychic) powers. The acquisition of such powers, however, does not constitute true 'Adhyātmika' (spiritual) 'Yoga', that is to say, the form of discipline that concerns itself with the soul-life. Nor does it result in the attainment of 'Sānti' or peace, i. e. unbroken tranquillity of the spirit. Nor again does it help in reaching God, which indeed is the main object of all Yogic practices. On the other hand, the acquisition of those powers are so many obstacles on the path. Perfect 'Vairāgya' or the spirit of complete detachment from all selfish or egoistic desires is possible only through devotion to Bhagavān, which is so essential to gaining a true mastery over the mind.

4. JNANAYOGA.

After the 'Chitta' has undergone a course of purification by way of 'Karma-

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* In the course of the first six chapters of the *Gita* Sri Bhagavan has discussed the prevailing philosophical doctrines of His time and pointed out their imperfections. Chapters VII to XII are devoted to establishing His own views and completing the scheme of His teachings. The remaining chapters are given to an elaboration of the details.

* यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥

yoga,' and when the mind has been subdued by the power of 'Abhyāsa-yoga,' the 'Buddhi' of the 'Sādhaka' (i.e., his Reason or higher discriminating faculty functioning on the higher plane) becomes steady and purged of impurities. It is at this stage that he becomes qualified to enter on the path of acquiring 'Jñāna', i. e., Knowledge of Higher Truths (relating to Soul, God, and Universe). For the 'Sādhaka,' having in the first place attained 'Sama' i. e., internal tranquillity and 'Dama' or control over the external senses, is now fitted to approach an 'Achārya' or preceptor to hear from his lips the higher truths as revealed in the Sāstras and then to ponder over them again and again.

This form of 'Jñānayoga' is thus the application of the Sādhaka's 'Buddhi' or Higher Reason to a real understanding of the Scriptural Truths. This 'Yoga' is also known as 'Swādhyāya' or the higher study of the Scriptures. (Gītā IV. 28).

5. BHAKTIYOGA.

In this way, having successfully worked out the first three courses of 'Sādhana', namely, 'Karmayoga,' 'Abhyāsayoga' and 'Jñānayoga,' the 'Sādhaka' develops within himself a strong attraction for Srī Bhagavān. When this comes to pass, he becomes eligible to enter on the path that leads directly to God-Vision, i. e., the realization of the Divine Being in Himself. This matter has been elucidated in Slokas 9 to 12 of Chapter XII. The process comprises seven distinct steps as described below:—

(1) 'KARMA-PHALA-ARPAṆA' (Dedication of the fruits of action.) The first step is the 'Arpaṇa, i.e., dedication of 'Karma-phala' (the fruits of 'Karma') to Bhagavān. This, according to Srī Bhagavān, represents the lowermost position for those following the path of Devotion; for such 'Karma-phala-arpaṇa' is the earliest of acts done in direct relation to the Lord. Here the 'Sādhaka' has recourse to 'Yoga' which establishes his contact with the Lord by constant remembrance, while offering the fruits of his acts to the Lord and the Lord alone. (Gītā XII. 11). Further, there is a world of difference between these two types of 'Karma'—the 'Karma' of 'Karmayoga' and the 'Karma' of 'Bhaktiyoga'. For, the objective of 'Karmayoga' is solely the purification of the 'Chitta'. Its primary object is never the cultivation or realization of 'Prema' or Love for Bhagavān, although the seed of such desire exists. But in 'Bhaktiyoga', Love for the Lord having sprung up in the heart of the 'Sādhaka,' he turns in thought to Srī Bhagavān (who is his 'Iṣṭa Deva', the Deity of his heart's longing) each time he performs an action. The primary object with which such an act is performed is the offering of the fruit thereof at His lotus-like feet (Gītā IV. 24). By such constant remembrance of the Lord ('Gītā' VIII. 7) the devotee comes to approach Him nearer and nearer with a view to uniting with Him. It is this state that has been represented by the term "मद्योगमाश्रित", i. e., having taken refuge in union with Me—God ('Gītā' XII. 11). The 'Sādhaka' now engages himself in righteous acts the fruit of which is worth surrendering to Srī Bhagavān. But never does the 'Sādhaka' do any single act that goes against Him.

(2) 'KARMA-ARPAṆA' (Dedication of 'Karma' itself). In the second succeeding stage 'Karma' itself is done for the Lord's sake ('Gītā' XII.10). In other words, here, in the place of the fruit of the act being dedicated to the Lord, the act itself is so dedicated ('Gītā' III. 30). This may indeed resemble work done by the Devotee as Servant for the Lord as Master. Nevertheless, there is a vital difference. Here Srī Bhagavān in the eye of the devotee is not like the master who stands apart and is served, but He is the supreme Goal to attain whom by means of whole-hearted loving service becomes the devotee's soul aim in life ('Gītā'XI. 55). Having arrived at this stage, the 'Sādhaka' looks upon his own house, his family, wealth, body, mind, reason, equally with all powers of action, etc., and indeed every objective existence, as things that belong to the Lord and the Lord alone, and in

using them he does it for the purpose of the Lord only and never in his own personal interest. Every time he does anything he concentrates on this idea, and so he remains engaged all the time in the thought of the Lord ('Gītā' VIII. 7). Each and every act, not even excluding the act of eating meals, is performed by him for the sake of Srī Bhagavān, because he knows that such things as his body, his family, etc. all belong to the Lord, and that therefore they will all require to be maintained and preserved for the Lord's sake. Furthermore, he understands that the doing of all such work as aforesaid is the doing of God's work. In the same way, again, he recognizes that all 'Yajña' (Sacrificial offerings), all acts of charity, all austerities, and so on are God's work, as intended to promote the welfare of mankind, and he takes to them as God's work (Gītā IX. 27). For the devotee knows that the protection of 'Dharma' is the Lord's primary work which is supremely dear to His heart, so much so that He willingly incarnates Himself (IV. 7-8) for the purpose. Furthermore, the last-mentioned three kinds of work, viz., sacrifice, charity and penances, are factors conducive to the purification of human society (XVIII. 5).* If we accustom ourselves to do work in the spirit of 'Karma-arpaṇa,' i. e. of its dedication to the Lord, then the doing of all routine work connected with daily physical existence is transformed into 'Pūjā' or worship of the Lord (XVIII. 45-46, 56). It is essential now for the 'Sādhaka' to make God his only Goal, to keep the 'Chitta' continually turned towards Him fixedly and to look with an equal eye on all (Gītā XVIII. 57). Understanding that all beings, high or low, great or small, are integral parts of Srī Bhagavān, he is now able with the spiritual eye to recognise that they are spiritually all co-equal, (Gītā V. 18). And for the same reason, understanding that all work conducive to the welfare of humanity is God's primary work and very dear to Him, the devotee engages himself with great zeal in such work. (Gītā V. 25; XII. 4). When work is done in this spirit, then, even if the result turns out to be adverse, or if it falls below his expectations, the 'Sādhaka' remains unaffected and unattached. Furthermore, because he does his work as God's work and not as his own, sin does not touch him at all (Gītā V. 10, 19, 28). For he clearly understands that all energy necessary to the doing of such work, such as his power of action, etc., belongs to God alone (VII. 12). Hence in the doing of such work the 'Sādhaka' is but engaged in training himself to be an instrument in God's hands (XIII. 33).

(3) 'ABHYASA'. The difference between the 'Abhyāsa' of 'Abhyāsayoga' proper and that of 'Bhaktiyoga' may be thus stated. The object of the former type of 'Abhyāsa' is to make the 'Chitta' one-pointed, and in order to attain this object the practicant begins by fixing it on some desired object or on any particular spot. But here, in the case of 'Bhaktiyoga', the sole aim and object of 'Abhyāsa' is to reach Bhagavān, and He is also the object of concentration (XII. 9). This 'Abhyāsa' or spiritual practice here takes the form of the worship of the Lord. Such worship includes the following: firstly, the muttering of the Divine name ('Mantra') signifying the devotee's 'Iṣṭa Deva' (Chosen Deity); secondly, creating an image of the divine form of the Deity in one's heart; and thirdly, fixing the 'Chitta' on that holy Form with faith and whole-heartedness. Those who take to this kind of devotional exercise called contemplation are speedily lifted up out of bondage by the Lord (XII. 2, 6, 7, 9). Now it is necessary for the devotee to take to the worship of the particular 'Iṣṭa Deva' (Viṣṇu, Sakti, Siva, etc.) towards whom he feels naturally attracted in spirit. For the purpose of this form of worship the devotee should keep steadily before his eye a fascinating picture of his 'Iṣṭa Deva', so that conformably thereto he may also create inside his heart a beautiful image of the Deity, complete in all parts beginning from the feet and gradually rising higher till it

* यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥

includes all the limbs of the upper parts. Then on that full-limbed inner image fixed in his heart the worshipper should be able to concentrate his 'Chitta.' And when such concentration on the image of the Deity in the heart has been effected, the worshipper has to be very careful lest any kind of alien or disturbing thought should find entrance within. But the moment the 'Chitta' goes astray,—as it often naturally must happen in the beginning—the worshipper should be able speedily to bring it back and fix it on the image of the Deity worshipped and meditated upon (VI. 25-26, 35). In this way, by means of such careful and repeated efforts, the 'Chitta' will in the end get united to the image of the Deity meditated upon and worshipped. This form of devotional practice should be resorted to daily and also regularly at appointed times. The most suitable hours for the purpose are the mornings and the evenings.

(4) JNANA. By means of appropriate devotional efforts as above described, and as a necessary fruit thereof, the 'Sādhaka' experiences within himself the rise of 'Jñāna' (or higher knowledge). The 'Jñāna' that thus arises is not the product merely of the intellectual powers, but the 'Sādhaka' has now spontaneously to develop certain higher qualities of the soul, to which has been given the name of 'Jñāna,' as described in Slokas 7 to 11 of Chapter XIII of the 'Gītā'. At this stage, because of the thoroughly purified state of his 'Karma' and 'Chitta,' and because of his subjecting himself to a vigorous course of training in 'Sravaṇa' (listening to scriptural truths from the lips of the 'Guru',)'Manana' (pondering over the same in the mind) and 'Nididhyāsana (deeply concentrating and meditating on the revealed truths), the devotee attains in due course to a knowledge of certain fundamental realities, e. g., 'Prakṛti (Matter or Nature), 'Puruṣa' (Spirit or Self) 'Jñeya' (or the Supreme object of Realization), i. e. 'Brahma' and the like generally and that of 'Kṣetra' and 'Kṣetrajña' in particular. In this manner, by means of constant 'Nididhyāsana' (profound meditation), the 'Chitta' of the 'Sādhaka' after crossing the lower planes rises to the plane of the 'Kāraṇa-śarīra', the finest of the vehicles with which the 'Jīvātmā' (the individual soul) indentifies itself, making it its abode, and where it is known as Prājña (knower). The 'Sādhaka' now experiences that there is a higher state still on the onward march of the soul, representing the state of divine illumination known as 'Gāyatrī'. This appertains to the 'Turīya' (Super-Spiritual) or the fourth stage of consciousness transcending, as it does, the state of 'Kāraṇa' (spiritual) consciousness. It is with the help of this 'Gāyatrī' that the 'Sādhaka' is able to rise still higher and to cross the circle of Māyā, after which it will become possible for the 'Sadhaka' to reach Srī Bhagavān Himself ('Gitā' VII. 5, 14; IX. 13,)

(5) DHYANA: (Deep Meditation.) Dhyāna represents a higher state of spiritual growth than that of 'Jñāna' (XII. 12). This stage is known also as the stage of 'Dhyānayoga' (XVIII. 52). This Dhyāna is not the product of the activity either of the 'Chitta' or of the brain, but it is possible only through the working of the heart. The process may be thus described. By constant practice of self-surrendering service for the Lord's sake, and by worship of Srī Bhagavān as the result of a strong compelling natural attraction for Him, and finally by reason of the evolution of the higher qualities of the Spirit, for which the name 'Jñāna' has been given, the heart ('Hṛdaya') naturally becomes purged of all impurity. Then is born in the heart 'Prema' or Love Divine in its highest form. Such Love flows towards the Lord in an uninterrupted stream, with the result that the 'Dhyātā', i. e., the devotee in a state of single-minded loving meditation soon finds his 'Dhyeya', i. e., the Supreme object of his meditation—Srī Bhagavān Himself, seated in his lotus-shaped heart ('Gītā' XIII. 18, 23, 32; XV. 15). Then, having experienced this Vision Divine, the devotee becomes 'en rapport' with the Lord's lotus-like Feet. This is the state of 'Praveśa,' i. e., of inmost penetration or

entrance into the Divine Essence. Then the devotee tastes the lotus-honey of the Lord's Feet—a rare achievement—and attains his 'summum bonum', for he has nothing farther to aspire to. The course of this orderly march of progress is as follows: first, Divine 'Jñāna'; then the Vision Divine; and then, in the final stage, 'Praveśa' or entrance into the Divine Essence (Gītā XI. 54). And now, whenever and the moment the devotee seeks by meditation to find the Lord, then and that very moment he comes faec to face with Him in his heart. Here at this stage is directly experienced the oneness of the 'Dhyātā' (the person meditating) with the 'Dhyeya' (the object of his meditation), namely, the Lord Himself; the oneness also of the 'Nāma' i. e. Name of the Lord with the 'Nāmi' (Himself for whom the Name stands, namely, Srī Bhagavān); the oneness also of the 'Mantra,' i. e., the holy symbols or letters with which to invoke the 'Iṣṭa Deva' (the Chosen Deity) with the 'Iṣṭa Deva' Himself. This is the state of 'Atmā-arpaṇa', that is to say, the 'Arpaṇa' or surrender of the Jivātmā itself to Srī Bhagavān. In this state the 'Sādhaka'—worshipper is blessed with a vision of the Lord's 'Viśvarūpa', or the Universal 'Rūpa' or Form of Srī Bhagavān. In this state the devotee finds Bhagavān manifested everywhere in His creation, so that he actually sees Him in everything around Him, and in that way he is able to find out for himself that all individual existences are indeed so many different forms of Srī Bhagavān. Undoubtedly this represents a spiritual stage supremely difficult of attainment. (Gītā VII. 19).

The devotee now becomes a centre of divine activity wherefrom radiates Srī Bhagavān's spiritual energy for the uplift of 'Saṃsara' or the world (in bondage). This divine energy first flows into the devotee's heart and then flows out of him as centre into the world of 'Sasṃara' for its highest spiritual welfare. The life-mission of such a devotee thus becomes 'Paropakāra' or living for others. In the heart of the vast majority of people Srī Bhagavān dwells as 'Upadraṣṭa', i. e. as one who merely watches. In other words, He remains only as 'Sākṣī' or Witness of things and actions. But, for the devotee who is engaged in worshipping the Lord in a spirit of utter devotion, with the heart fixed on Him and Him alone, for such a devotee the Lord becomes 'Anumantā'. That is to say, He becomes adviser and takes upon Himself the work of supplying to the devotee all his needs and preserving for him what he has already acquired (Gītā. IX. 22). Higher still is the stage of the devotee who with his whole heart merged in the Lord seeks to turn the minds of others away from the distraction, of the world and lead them towards the Lord by means of imparting spiritual instruction and recounting the Lord's deeds of glory and the like. For, Sri Bhagavan then distroys all the darkness (of such devotee's soul) begotten of Ignorance by the luminous lamp of wisdom. (X. 9-11). In the case of this (higher) type of Bhaktas (or devoted souls) Bhagavān becomes for them 'Bhoktā' or Enjoyer. In other words, in their case the fruit of all acts done by them by way of self-surrendering sacrifice or 'Yajña' is accepted and appropriated by the Lord as His very own, with a view to promoting the spiritual welfare of the world. This is the purport of Sloka 22 of Chapter XIII of the 'Gītā.'

(6) 'KARMA-PHALA-TYAGA' (Surrendering of the final fruit). The surrender is superior to even the 'Dhyrna' or meditation as explained above (Gītā XII. 12). For, this renunciation of Karma-phala (fruit of action) is not the kind of renunciation as ordinarily understood. It is to be taken in the sense of the devotee sacrificing or surrendering 'Mokṣa', i. e., liberation for himself at the feet of the Lord, when such liberation is actually within his reach. The final discourse of the 'Gītā' is accordingly named 'Moksa-saṃnyāsa', which signifies 'Saṃnyāsa' or renunciation of 'Mokṣa' itself by the 'Bhakta' (devotee). At this Stage the 'Bhakta' (Devotee) aforesaid has fully earned his title to 'Mukti' or liberation. Nevertheless, he looks upon the Status of

'Mokṣa' (personal liberation) as comparatively of little worth, when viewed side by side with the privilege of remaining engaged in the service of the Lord for evermore. Therfore does he gladly renounce the position of a liberated soul. This is the stage when what is known as 'Parā Bhakti'—'Bhakti' transcending all limits—becomes capable of attainment (Gītā XVIII. 54-55) and the devotee dedicates his very self to the Lord.

(7) 'SANTI.' (Supreme Peace). The stage of final Peace is truly reached only when there is that utter surrender of Self (Atmā) following on the rununciation by the devotee of personal liberation for the sake of His Service when it (liberation) is already within his reach.* (*Kalyan*)

Characteristics of a Sthitaprajna (one who is stable in mind) or Jivanmukta (one who is liberated in this very life).

(Verses 55 to 71, Chapter II of Gita)

1. The mind of a 'Sthitaprajña' is free from all desires and ambitions.
2. He is satisfied in the Self by the Self. In other words, he seeks satisfaction from no other source than his own Self who is the fount of all bliss and he is always calm and happy.
3. He is never perturbed even in affliction.
4. He never covets pleasures.
5. He is free from attachment, fear and anger.
6. He has no affection (involving attachment) for any one.
7. He is never delighted on receiving something good.
8. He does not grudge the accrual of an evil.
9. He withdraws his senses from the various objects of enjoyment just as a tortoise draws in its libs on all sides, and keeps them turned inward.
10. He has his mind and senses controlled and depends on God in every way.
11. Having brought his mind and senses under control, he enjoys the various objects with the senses, free from attachment and repulsion and in conformity with the injunctions of the scriptures.
12. He is always calm and cheerful.
13. He is always awake to the Supreme Bliss which is eternal, free from taint and conscious and has shut his eyes against all transient and ephemeral worldly pleasures. In other words, he is merged in his own Self and is indifferent to sensual enjoyments.
14. He is never excited by worldly enjoyments and is always centred in the Self.
15. He renounces all desires, attachment, egoism and hope.

* Translated by Satisachandra Gūha.

Samkhyayoga in the Gita.

By Jayadayal Goyandka.

One gentleman has asked me the following question:—

What is the conception of Sannyāsa according to the Bhagavadgītā ?

It is very difficult to give the keynote of the 'Gītā'. It is such a mysterious book that, even though many an erudite scholar and a pious saint has applied his brain to it and expressed his views about it, it still continues to open ever new and valuable vistas of thought to those who seek to dive deep into it. How, then, could it be possible to expound its true meaning ? Although it is something beyond my capacity to give any dissertation on the 'Bhagavadgītā', I hereby venture to place before the readers my own ideas on the subject, which I have been able to form according to my own poor lights. Nothing is farther from my intention than to cast any reflection on any particular class, order, sect, creed or commentator. My object is simply to express my own ideas.

There is a wide divergence of views about the 'Saṃnyāsa' as understood in the 'Bhagavadgītā':—

(1) One school of thought says that the 'Gītā' offers two distinct paths of spiritual discipline, viz. 'Sannyāsa' or the Path of Renunciation and 'Karmayoga' or the Path of Action. Of these the former is the principal and direct means of attaining liberation. It consists in the complete renunciation (सं+न्यास) of all forms of action as a result of right knowledge (सम्यक्ज्ञान), viz. the knowledge that action leads to bondage. In other words, it means entering the order of recluses (संन्यासाश्रम) as prescribed by the Sāstras (scriptures).

(2) There is another school which holds that, although one can attain God by entering the order of 'Saṃnyāsa', i.e., by renouncing all forms of action as a result of transcendental wisdom, 'Gītā' does not deal with this order, and even if it does so anywhere, it treats it as a matter of secondary importance. 'Gītā' treats of the path of disinterested action (निष्कामकर्मयोग) alone; nay, even the term 'Saṃnyāsa' has been generally used therein in the sense of 'Niṣkāma Karmayoga'.

(3) There is a third school which, though it admits the necessity of entering the order of 'Saṃnyāsa' as prescribed by the Sāstras, nevertheless recognizes 'Sāṃkhya' and 'Karmayoga' as two distinct and independent paths leading to one and the same goal, viz. God-realization. It does not, however, take the term 'Sāṃkhya' or 'Saṃnyāsa' to mean the order of recluses. It interprets 'Saṃnyāsa' as complete absorption in God who is Omnipresent, All-existent, All-intelligent and All-blissful, disclaiming authorship of all actions.

There are some other minor schools besides; but they are all covered by one or other of the above three schools. Now let us consider which of these three views is the most rational and convincing. With this end in view we shall examine each view individually.

(1) If we accept the first view, viz. that 'Saṃnyāsa' (renunciation of all forms of action) is the only means of attaining liberation, we shall presently see that it militates against the following dictum of the Lord in the 'Bhagavadgītā':—

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

(V. 5.)

"The Yogīs (Karmayogīs) reach the same destination as the Sāṃkhyas (the followers of the 'Sāṃkhya-Mārga' or the Path of knowledge". Here the Lord has in no equivocal terms recognised 'Karmayoga' as an independent spiritual discipline like 'Sāṃkhyayoga'.

Besides, in the very next verse 'Saṃnyāsa' and 'Karmayoga' have been called equally conducive to the highest good, nay, 'Karmayoga' has been declared to be superior. Under such circumstances how can it be believed that 'Karmayoga' is not an independent means of attaining liberation. Of course, the two paths are radically different from each other and those eligible for the one must necessarily differ in temperament from those who are qualified for the other. Nay, the two paths cannot be followed at one and the same time, although they can be followed by one and the same individual at different times. Thus it is proved that both the paths, though different from one another, lead to the same goal, i.e., liberation. Now let us consider whether the term 'Saṃnyāsa' here denotes the order of recluses as prescribed in the Sāstras or something else. Arjuna puts the following question to the Lord:—

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥
(V. I)

"O Kṛṣṇa ! You extol both complete renunciation and due performance of actions in one breath. Pray tell me definitely which of the two is superior."

Now, on the basis of the above couplet it may be urged that the term 'Saṃnyāsa' has been used in the 'Bhagavadgītā' in the sense of the order of recluses as prescribed in the Sāstras or the renunciation of actions the performance of which has been enjoined upon us. This interpretation, however, does not appear to be warranted by reason, as the Lord has not extolled any particular order or the renunciation of actions in any of the preceding verses. The word 'Saṃnyāsa' occurring in the above verse cannot therfore be interpreted as above. He has, on the contrary, extolled at several places transcendental knowledge (ज्ञान), good qualities like detachment (वैराग्य) and disclaiming authorship of all actions bodily, organic and mental. Nay, He has also pointed out the necessity of a wise man (ज्ञानी) performing actions that are ordained by the Sāstras through his body (vide Gītā III. 20—23, 25—27, 29, 33 and IV. 15). No doubt the order of 'Saṃnyāsa', when coupled with right knowledge, offers greater facility for the attainment of liberation; but even there, to my mind, it is right knowledge and not the order of 'Saṃnyāsa', which is responsible for liberation and that can be acquired by all irrespective of caste or order (vide 'Gītā' VI. 1-2).

Moreover, it is conclusively proved in the 'Bhagavadgītā' that complete renunciation of all forms of action is not possible:—

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥
(III. 5)

"No one can remain inert even for a moment. Every one is helplessly driven to action by one's innate qualities."

Even if any one renounces any particular action, the renunciation thereof has been recognized by the 'Bhagavadgītā' as something born out of ignorance (तमस्).

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।
मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥
(XVIII. 7)

"It is not therefore desirable to renounce action that is prescribed by the Sāstras. Its renunciation through ignorance has been styled as तामस (partaking of 'Tamas')."

And mere formal renunciation of all outward actions does not lead to perfection.

न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥
(III. 4)

Nay, in the very next verse, dwelling in the mind on the objects of senses while wilfully refraining from using the tongue (speech) as well as the other senses (of action) has been deprecated and branded as an act of hypocrisy. Later on it has been pointed out that he who practises 'Karmayoga' with the organs duly brought under control and without attachment has

been called praiseworthy (vide 'Gītā' III. 6-7).

In view of what has been said above, if we take 'Saṃnyāsa' to mean formal renunciation of outward actions only, there is no possibility of its leading to liberation, and in that case the following dictum of the Lord, occurring in Chapter V, stands contradicted:—

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रयसकरावुभौ ।

(V. 2)

"Both 'Saṃnyāsa' and 'Karmayoga' are conducive to the highest good."

For one who formally renounces outward actions only has been called a तामस त्यागी (a relinquisher of the तामस or lowest type), as pointed out above.

The word 'निःश्रेयस' in the above verse and 'सिद्धि' in verse 4 of Chapter III both denote salvation. If, on the other hand, 'Siddhi' is taken to signify a stage lower than salvation and not salvation itself, the view that mere relinquishment of action does not lead to salvation is strengthened. For, if it does not enable one to acquire an accomplishment of a lower order, how can it lead to liberation which is the highest achievement of human life ? Considering all these points, we are led to believe that the word 'Saṃnyāsa' has been used in the 'Bhagavadgītā' in the sense of 'Jñānayoga' (the path of Knowledge) and that the latter has got to do only with the mental outlook rather than with any external condition of life. Nor has it anything to do with a particular caste or order: it is, on the other hand, an exalted means of God-realization, which can be resorted to by all irrespective of caste or order.

Some people believe that the eligibility for treading the path of Knowledge is confined to the order of 'Saṃnyāsa' alone; but this, too, is not correct. Had it been so, the Lord would not have incited Arjuna to warfare in course of His comprehensive discourse on 'Sāṃkhyaniṣṭhā', contained in verses 11 to 30 of Chapter II. In Chapter XVIII, when Arjuna asks the Lord clearly to define त्याग (relinquishment) and संन्यास (renunciation), the Lord at the very outset defines त्याग as फलासक्तित्याग (i. e., relinquishment of the fruit of actions and attachment thereto), and later on, while offering to enunciate the doctrine of 'Sāṃkhya' or 'Saṃnyāsa', goes on to tell Arjuna in plain words that he who ascribes the authorship of natural actions (which are attributable to five causes) to the mere (pure) Self ('Atmā') on account of perverted intelligence, is silly: he is unable to comprehend the nature of the Self rightly. In other words, he who attributes the authorship of an action to himself is not a 'Sāṃkhyayogī' (a follower of the Path of Knowledge). A 'Sāṃkhyayogī', has been characterised as below:—

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।

(XVIII. 17)

"One who does not feel that he is the doer of an action and whose intellect is not affected by worldy objects and actions (is a real Sāṃkhyayogī). Hence 'Saṃnyāsa' means casting off egoism (अहंकार). Had the Lord taken 'Saṃnyāsa' to mean formal renunciation of actions, He could not have insisted on their mental renunciation (vide 'Gītā' V. 13).

This proves that 'Sāṃkhya' or 'Saṃnyāsa' does not mean formal relinquishment of actions, and that the path of disinterested action is a direct means of attaining liberation just like 'Sāṃkhyayoga.'

(2) If, on the other hand, it is believed, as held by the second school, that the 'Gītā' treats of the path of disinterested action only, and that the word 'Saṃnyāsa' also signifies the same, this too does not appeal to us, as the Lord has in the beginning of Chapter III set forth both the paths separately for different types of aspirants, and thereby silenced the doubts entertained by Arjuna:—

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥

(III. 3)

In Chapter II the two paths have been severally dealt with one after the other. Having discussed the 'Sāṃkhyayoga', the Lord Says—

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धियोंगे त्विमां श्रृणु ।

(II. 39)

"So far I have set forth the viewpoint of the 'Sāṃkhyayogī'. Now I proceed to present to you the other view, viz. that of the 'Karmayogī'."

Several other texts could be quoted from the 'Bhagavadgītā' to show that the two paths have been separately dealt with therein (vide Chapter V. 1—5). No doubt both the paths ultimately lead to the same goal, viz. God; but the two radically differ from each other; nay, the followers of the two paths adopt different modes of action and different lines of thought. Their mental outlook and procedure are also divergent. A 'Karmayogī' looks upon his actions, their fruit, God and himself as distinct entities, so long as he practises this Yoga. He solely depends upon God and performs all actions in a spirit of utter dedication to Him, relinquishing their fruit and all attachment thereto. (vide 'Gītā' III. 30; IV. 20; V. 10; IX. 27-28, XII. 11-12; XVIII. 56-57.)

A 'Sāṃkhyayogī, on the other hand, disclaims the authorship of all actions performed with the instrumentality of the mind, the senses and the body, knowing that all qualities which have their origin in 'Māyā' (Ignorance) function in qualities, and solely abides for ever in the omnipresent, all-existent, all-intelligent and all-blissful God. (vide 'Gītā'. III. 28; V. 8—9, 13; VI. 31; XIII. 29-30; XIV. 19-20; XVIII. 17,49-55.)

A 'Karmayogī' claims the authorship of his actions (vide V. 11.), while a 'Sāṃkhyayogī' does not (vide V.8-89). The former dedicates the fruit of actions performed by himself to the Lord (vide IX. 27-28), whereas the latter does not recognize action performed with the instrumentality of the mind and the senses as actions at all. While a 'Karmayogī' looks upon God as distinct from him (vide XII. 6-7), a 'Sāṃkhyayogī' always identifies himself with Him (vide VI.29-31; VII. 19; XVIII. 20). A 'Karmayogī' recognizes the existence of Matter (प्रकृति)and material objects (vide. XVIII. 9, 61), whereas a 'Sāṃkhyayogī' does not recognize the existence of anything else besides 'Brahma' (God) (vide XIII. 30). If we ever find him recognizing the existence of anything else, it is only by way of assumption (अध्यारोप) in order to bring it home to others, and not in sooth. He regards matter as a phantom(माया)and not as something substantial. A 'Karmayogī' while holding actions to be responsible for their fruit, regards himself as a relinquisher of their fruit and attachment thereto, and recognizes the existence of actions and their fruit as separate entities. A 'Sāṃkhyayogī', on the other hand, does not recognize the existence of actions and their fruit, nor does he regard himself as concerned with them in any way. A 'Karmayogī' performs actions whereas they proceed automatically from the mind and body of a 'Sāṃkhyayogī', who does not perform them (vide V. 14), The liberation of a 'Karmayogī' is brought about by his pure disinterestedness, his self-surrender to the Lord and divine grace (vide II. 51; XVIII. 56) whereas the liberation of a 'Sāṃkhyayogī' is attributable to his remaining constantly and absolutely merged in the all-existent, allintelligent and all-blissful God (vide V. 17-24). Thus, even though the goal attainable by them is the same, the two paths are widely divergent and altogether independent. There is no doubt that the Lord prescribed for Arjuna the path of disinterested action combined with devotion, deeming it suitable for him; but the 'Bhagavadgītā' also contains an equally detailed exposition of the Path of Knowledge. Nay, at places the Lord has spoken very highly of it. He calls 'Karmayoga' superior to 'Jñānayoga' simply because it is the easier of the two, and because it can be practised even by those who feel their identity with the body (देहाभिमानी), whereas the path of Knowledge is far more difficult to tread (vide 'Gītā' V. 2-6). This proves that the

'Gītā' preaches both the paths. It does not preach 'Karmayoga' alone, nor does it confine itself to an exposition of 'Sāṃkhyayoga'. Nor is it true that the term 'Saṃnyāsa' denotes 'Karmayoga'.

The above exposition would reveal that the 'Gītā' preaches both the above paths and that the term 'Sāṃkhya' or 'Saṃnyāsa' occurring therein does not mean formal relinquishment of actions.

(3) Now a careful consideration of the arguments advanced by the third school would make one believe that they are more cogent and convincing. Really speaking, the term 'Saṃnyāsa' has been used in the 'Gītā' in the sense of 'Sāṃkhyayoga' or the path of Knowledge. Words and expressions like 'Saṃnyāsa', Sāṃkhyayoga' and 'Jñānayoga' denote one and the same path. Verses 49 to 55 of Chapter XVIII contain a lengthy exposition of this path. The 'Saṃnyāsa' which has been declared in verse 49 as leading to परमां नैष्कर्म्य सिद्धिं (perfection of freedom from obligation) is nothing but 'Jñānayoga'. A critical examination of these verses will show that fixing one's mind on God as identical with one's own self as well as the result of that concentration is what is known as पराभक्ति (highest from of devotion), and that is the highest stage of 'Jñānayoga' One who practises this type of 'Jñānayoga' looks upon all the objects and activities of this world as an amplification of 'Māyā' (Illusion), which is itself composed of the three qualities, and regards himself as an unconcerned witness thereof (vide 'Gītā' XIV. 19-20). He is always united with 'Brahma' and moves in 'Brahma' (vide 'Gītā' VI. 31; V. 26). He perceives the whole stock of actions as dwelling in Māyā (vide 'Gītā,. III. 27-28). He totally disclaims the authorship of all actions, bodily, mental and organic. The senses move among their objects; the 'Atmā' (Self) transcends them and is entirely different from them: so thinking, he does not feel himself to be the agent during the period of his spiritual discipline. Nay, even in 'Māyā' he perceives an expansion of 'Brahma' and this outlook of his makes everything appear to him as 'Brahma.' He looks upon 'Prakṛti' (Matter) and its effects as distinct from the Self, transitory and ephemeral, and his own self as a non-doer and non-enjoyer; and, feeling the presence of the 'Atmā' everywhere, he perseveres in his discipline. And eventually when the existence of everything else than 'Brahma' is eliminated, he attains that highest pinnacle of wisdom which baffles all description and where he perceives nothing but 'Brahma'. His mind, intellect and heart, etc. are merged in 'Brahma' and nothing remains except the one 'Vāsudeva' (vide 'Gītā' V. 17; VII. 19).

He looks upon both the moving (animate) and the motionless (inanimate) as a manifestation of God Himself. Nay, he finds Him pervading and permeating all objects (vide Gītā XIII. 15).

Such a 'Saṃnyāsī' is capable of activity in the eyes of the world, both during the period of discipline as well as after attaining the stage of perfection (सिद्धावस्था); but the actions performed by him are no longer in the nature of actions, inasmuch as he looks upon all worldly objects as indentical with 'Brahma' and does not claim their authorship (vide 'Gītā' XVIII. 17).

The above dissertation reveals that, according to the third school, the word 'Saṃnyāsa' has not been used in the 'Bhagavadgītā' in the sense of the order of 'Saṃnyāsa' but it means disclaiming the authorship of all actions and constantly remaining one with God who is all-pervading, all-existant, all-intelligent and all-blissful. Hence it can be practised by all irrespective of caste and order. It is als oknown by the name of 'Jñānanyoga'. This is what has been called as 'Saṃnyāsa' in the 'Bhagavadgītā.'

It is equally true that the 'Gītā' also contains a detailed exposition of another independent discipline known as 'Karmayoga'. It consists in renouncing the fruit of actions and attachment thereto and performing them as a behest from the Lord and for His sake and with a balanced

mind. This has been denoted by the terms समत्वयोग, बुद्धियोग, कर्मयोग, तदर्थकर्म, मदर्थकर्म, मत्कर्म, etc. in the 'Gītā'. Of the various types of 'Karmayoga', that in which 'Bhakti' (Devotion) predominates is preferable and an aspirant who follows this path speedily attains perfection (vide 'Gītā' VI. 47).

Thus both the paths lead to perfection. This should, however, not be taken to mean that I am opposed to entering the order of 'Saṃnyāsa' as prescribed in the Sāstras or that I do not believe that one who is leading the life of a recluse is incapable of attaining liberation through right knowledge (सम्यग्ज्ञान). What I mean is this that the 'Saṃnyāsa' preached by the 'Gītā' does not lay stress on any particular order. It takes its stand solely on transcendental wisdom (ज्ञान). Hence the teachings of the 'Gītā' are open to all.

I further believe that the order of 'Saṃnyāsa' offers greater facilities to those who follow the Path of Knowledge.

Now, some people are of the opinion that the term 'Sāṃkhya' occuring in the 'Gītā' denotes the Sāṃkhya system, which is believed to have been founded by the sage Kapila. Careful thought would, however, reveal that this view is not correct. The doctrine of 'Sāṃkhya' preached in the 'Bhagavadgītā' is not the same as the Sāṃkhya system attributed to Kapila: it is, on the other hand, connected with transcendental wisdom. We find the terms प्रकृति and पुरुष used in verses 19-20 of Chapter XIII. These terms appear to have been borrowed from the 'Sāṃkhya' Philosophy. In fact, however, they are quite different from the terms used in the 'Sāṃkhya' system.

The Sāṃkhya system believes in a plurality of Puruṣas (souls) and holds them to be separate entities. The 'Gītā', on the other hand, recognizes only one Puruṣa as appearing in multitudinous forms (vide 'Gītā' XIII. 22; XVIII. 20). According to the 'Gītā' the several entities representing the various creatures are, in reality, the forms of one and the same Being (Puruṣa). The Sāṃkhya system, moreover, does not acknowledge a divine creator of this universe. The Gītā, however, expressly admits the existence of such a Creator. This proves that the 'Sāṃkhya' preached in the 'Gītā' is different from the Sāṃkhya system of the Sage Kapila.

There is one thing more to be mentioned in this connection. the 'Dhyānayoga' (the Path of Meditation) preached in the 'Gita' is indispensable for both the paths. That is why the Lord did not mention it as a separate path. 'Dhyānayoga' accompanies disinterested action taking God (the object of meditation) as a separate entity, whereas in 'Sāṃkhyayoga' He is meditated upon as indentical with the aspirant. 'Sāṃakhyayoga' cannot be accomplished without constantly thinking of God, who is all-existent, all-intelligent and all-blissful, as identical with the aspirant.

'Dhyānayoga' alone is capable of leading an aspirant to final beatitude, even though it may not be accompanied by either of the two paths described above:—

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥

(Gita XIII. 24)

This is, however, not recognized as an independent path, as meditation on God as identical with the aspirant is regarded as constituting 'Sāṃkhyayoga,' while that on God as a separate entity is considered to be a part of 'Karmayoga.' It has been mentioned separately simply because it does not require either actions or their relinquishment. It can, on the other hand, prove helpful to both. Mere 'Dhyānayoga' can enable a man to attain liberation, even though he may not cling to or relinquish actions.

Even though very efficacious and independent, this discipline has not been recognized as a separate path. It is therefore advisable that an aspirant should endeavour to realize God by having recourse to any of the aforsaid two paths, according to one's capacity, and combining it with 'Dhyānayoga'.

The Greatness of the Gita.

By Swami Dayanand.

The 'Bhagavadgita' is the essence of the Upaniṣads and expounds the secret doctrines of the Vedic Religion. It is the crowning gem of the Puranic lore. It is, indeed, the bed-rock of 'Adhyātma-vidyā' (the Science of Self-knowledge). It is really the key of all the seven systems of Vedic philosophy and is one of the 'Prasthāna-Traya' (three pillars of Vedantic Philosophy). It is one of the 'Pañcha Ratnas', or Five Gems of Sanskrit literature. It has passed even beyond the charmed circle of the Hindus and charmed the followers of other creeds and religions, so that it is at present read in not less than 700 tongues all over the world. Hence it has a host of commentaries and compendiums in different dialects; and it will undoubtedly have many more, since the Eternal Truth cannot be exhausted by any one set of human interpretations. But the outstanding distinction between the books composed by the pen of man and the Superhuman Words of the Spiritual Truth emanating from God Himself consists in the fact that the composition of the former, circumscribed by the limited intellect of man, is pre-eminently coloured by the mentality of its writer and is necessarily narrowed down to the pet and dominant ideas of his own mind; and hence, such a book is not suited to all times, places and environments. Whereas the Divine utterances are never imperfect, as God is above all limitations of Time and Space and as His Words are equally beneficent to all men of all times and all climes.

Above all, the Permanent Essence of God being perfect in every respect, it naturally follows that His Words are also perfect. Srí Kṛṣṇa is regarded in the Hindu Sāstras as God incarnate and hence His utterances in the form of the 'Gītā' are also perfect. The Hindu Sāstras declare:—"The milch cow is the Upaniṣads of the Vedas. The milkman is Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna is the calf; the wise enjoy the drink of milk which is the milk of the 'Gītā'."*

The Vedas and the 'Gītā', which is their epitome' have concentrated in one place the knowledge of the three Bhāvas, viz., 'Adhyatmic' (Spiritual), 'Adhidaivic' (Occult) and 'Adhibhoutic' (Material). These three aspects of the Vedas are emphasised upon, as is evident from the following extract:—"As the mixture of milk, sugar and rice constitutes a delicious meal fit for the gods, so the ambrosial 'Sruti', with the mixture of the three Bhāvas, secures the Bliss of 'Brahma' to the wise."

As every 'Mantra' of the Vedas admits of threefold interpretation, viz., 'Adhyatmic', 'Adhidaivic' and Adhibhoutic, so also does the 'Bhagavadgītā', which is an epitome of the Vedic Upaniṣads. Hence the greatness of the 'Gītā' is pre-eminently recognized among all Hindu scriptures. We give below the three aspects:—

1. THE ADHYATMIC (OR SPIRITUAL) SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GITA.

The Adhyātmic (Spiritual) aspect of the 'Gītā' is that which is everlasting and all-perfect. It declares that this human body is the very field of 'Dharma', i. e., 'Dharma-kṣetra'. If this field of Body is properly cultivated with the plough of spirituality, it is likely to yield four sorts of fruit, viz., 'Kāma' (desire), 'Artha' (wealth), 'Dharma' (virtue) and 'Mokṣa' (liberation).

The Five Pāṇḍavas, devoted to 'Dharma,' are the embodiment of the five primeval root-elements; and Srí Kṛṣṇa

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* सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

symbolises the Supreme Spirit, the Eternal and the Unchangeable One, seated in the 'Ajñā Chakra' and supervising this small universe of 'Piṇḍa' (the human frame). Arjuna is the 'Agni-tattwa,' the Vital Energy in the centre of these elements, which is regulated by His advice (the 'Gītā') seated in the 'Ajñā Chakra.' As soon as a man is tempted to sin, somebody seems to say to his inward ear, "Don't do it." Who is this somebody? Call it conscience if you will; it is the 'Kūṭastha,' the Supreme Spirit, that coexists with the individual soul in the same body and sounds this note of warning to the sinning man.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the blind king, stands for the blind mind,—blind, because of its inability to see the difference between the Good and the Evil. Sañjaya stands for the seeing or discriminating faculty known as 'Buddhi'. There are a hundred propensities of the mind; these are the sinful desires, symbolised by the hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, such as Duryodhana, etc. In the inward struggle for supremacy between the contending armies of the Good and the Evil, the Supreme Spirit symbolised by Srī Kṛṣṇa sits in the chariot of the body, wielding no weapons nor warring with any one but only advising Arjuna, the soul that seeks His help.

It is this Supreme Spirit that always urges the erring soul towards the Good. This inward urging of the individual ego by the Supreme Spirit is what is known in the Vedic Philosophy as the Adhyatmic aspect of the 'Gītā'.

II. THE ADHIDAIVIC (OR OCCULT) ASPECT OF THE GITA.

Hinduism believes in the existence of the superphysical worlds and of higher beings other than human. To such supernatural beings belong the "Devas and Asuras"—ever fighting with each other owing to their antagonistic natures, viz., 'Nivṛtti' and 'Pravṛtti'. It will be shown here that the 'Gītā', in the esoteric sense, relates to a war between the Devas and the Asuras who were in the forms of the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas; and that Srī Kṛṣṇa is no other than the Highest Deity, who, as usual, incarnates Himself, whenever virtue is in danger of defeat. But, in order to understand the aforesaid Occult Aspect of the 'Gītā', we ought to know in detail the doctrines about the 'Pravṛtti' and 'Nivṛtti,' the Philosophy of Creation and Incarnation.

As, in this external world, a set of opposite conditions, such as day and night, light and darkness, pleasure and pain, Sattwic Karma and Tamasic Karma, etc. is ever found to exist, so in the kingdom of the thought-world also "Pravṛtti" and "Nivṛtti" are ever found to operate. "Nivṛtti" may be defined as detachment from the world, which has for its results freedom from passion and pain, and realization of oneself as a spirit; whereas "Pravṛtti" is attachment to the world and worldly propensities, which chains the soul to the sorrows of life and death.

Hindu Psychology explains why persons take to 'Pravṛtti' and get entangled in worldly woes. It says that Psyche (mind) is, by its very nature, full of 'Rajas' (activity). It yields to the influences of the two other Guṇas, termed as 'Tamas' and 'Sattwa' in Hindu Psychology and which, translated roughly, may be called Ignorance and Gnosis. If the mind is worked upon by 'Tamas', it leads to 'Pravṛtti'. If the same mind yields to the operation of 'Sattwa,' it leads to 'Nivṛtti'. Thus, the one and the same mind manifests a set of two opposite qualities. And this is how Hindu Psychology accounts for the existence of these two opposite sets of beings, viz., the Devas and the Asuras in the Occult world and the good and the evil persons in this mortal world.

These dual sets of beings are always dwelling with each other, be they on heaven or on earth. We read of these wars between them both in the Vedas and the Purāṇas. In human society, whenever vice preponderates virtue, the Devas incarnate themselves in this world to fight the evil that represents the Asuras. But when vice is at its zenith and beyond the sphere

of their control, then comes the Avatār of Srī Viṣṇu, the Highest Deva of the Hindu Pantheon.

The object of the Avatār of Srī Kṛṣṇa is as follows. At the end of the 'Dwāpara Yuga' this world was overcome by 'Tamas' (darkness or evil) and men were steeped in the mire of sensuality. Hence the need for the intercession of a prodigious personality to restore the equilibrium of the world forces of Virtue and Religion. The Asuras of the Occult world incarnated themselves in royal houses and increased 'Adharma' (irreligion) by their power and pelf, pride and passion. Such was the compelling force of the current of those times that even an Avatār of a 'deva' such as Bhīṣma was, and a Brahmin such as Droṇa was, and many good people forgot their divine nature and joined forces with the evil-minded Asura Duryodhana, which goes to show that vice had reached its zenith and required the hand of a Pūrṇa Avatār to set it right.

At the outset of this war between the Devas and the Asuras in human bodies Srī Kṛṣṇa, the incarnation of God, addresses his 'Upadeśa' or advice to the erring world with a view to turning it from evil and directing it towards the true goal of Life. Arjuna represents the Nara, the Humanity, for whom these teachings are meant; and Srī Kṛṣṇa is the Nārāyaṇa, the Teacher-Incarnate.

Thus the dialogue between Srī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, in which form the 'Gītā' is cast, is nothing else than the dialogue between Nara and Nārāyāṇa. In fact, Srīmad Bhagavadgītā itself is literally "The Song Celestial" or "The Song of the Soul," and it is indeed a Song par excellence for all Eternity, unparallelled in any human tongue.

Such is the significance of the 'Gītā' as viewed from the 'Adhidaivic' or Occult aspect of it. Now let us view it in its last and third aspect.

III. THE ADHIBHOUTIC (MATERIAL OR NATURAL) ASPECT OF THE GITA.

The Material aspect of the 'Gītā' rests on the philosophy of the Eternal existence of Knowledge and Truth in spite of the decay of physical worlds, and also on their Revelation to the human race in different epochs of human civilization. Hinduism believes that in this mortal world knowledge of all kinds (whether Daivic or Asuric) is revealed in different forms and shapes to suit the spiritual and worldly needs of the humanity of each age through the instrumentality of the Ṛṣis who are superhuman beings like the Devas. Hinduism also believes in the influence of 'Sattwa' and 'Tamas' on the sum-total of the race mentality, rendering it either spiritual or materialistic. For instance, in the 'Satyayuga', when 'Sattwa' was the dominant idea of the age, human intellect was so illuminated as to be able to understand the Occult Truths; and so the Spiritual Truths were revealed in the shape of the Vedas, which were divided into three main sections, viz., Vedic Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas, and Upaniṣads, and were thrown open to all humanity in one thousand, one hundred and eighty forms of each; but in 'Kaliyuga,' the dark age of 'Tamas,' degeneracy set in; men became materialistic, and mankind missed the mental culture which was essential for the purpose of grasping these Spiritual Truths; and so the same truths were supplied in a specialised and condensed form to suit their type of mentality.

The Ṛṣi-incarnate responsible for compiling the 'Gītā' is Srī Vedavyāsa, so called because he compiled the four Vedas and the whole 'Mahābhārata' of which the 'Gītā' is an episode. The literary (Adhibhoutic) form of the 'Gītā' stands on a par with the literary importance of the Vedas, as the 'Gītā' is the quintessence of the Vedas, composed by the same Ṛṣi and moulded on the same lines as the Eternal Veda. This is the Adhibhoutic—natural or material—aspect of the 'Gita.'

Karmayoga in the Gita.

By Basanta Kumar Chatterji, M. A.

A discussion on Karmayoga resolves itself into a discussion of two questions, viz., (1) what Karma should be performed and (2) what is the proper way of performing it. It is proposed to examine in this article the light which has been shed on these two questions by the 'Bhagavadgītā'.

As regards the first question, what Karma should be performed, we find the following reply in the Gītā:—

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

"Sāstras are the proper authority for deciding the question what Karma should be performed and what Karma should not be performed. You should know the injunctions of the Sāstras in this matter and then proceed to act."

We were previously born in this world innumerable times. In those previous births we were sometimes born as men, sometimes as beasts and insects. The result of the acts which we performed in those births has persisted in the present birth in the form of the desires which exist in our mind and often lead us to perform improper acts. In order to achieve spiritual progress it is necessary that we should be completely free from all desires and attachments. The way to get rid of such desire and attachment is to perform acts enjoined on us by the Sāstras. For, in order to observe the injunctions and prohibitions in the Sāstras, it is necessary to exercise self-control and desist from many actions for which we have a natural tendency. This weakens the influence which our natural tendencies exercise on our character and ultimately renders our desire and attachment feeble. In this way we can get rid of the effects of the evil actions which we did in our previous births. The Iśopaniṣad contains the following verse on this point:—

विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयꣳ स ह ।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते ॥

"A man who knows both Vidyā and Avidyā can go beyond death with the help of Avidyā and attain everlasting bliss with the help of Vidyā."

Vidyā means knowledge and Avidyā means action. It is necessary to perform the actions enjoined in the Sāstras along with learning lessons on Brahmavidyā. The above verse says that one can go beyond death by means of Karma. The intention is that by performing Sāstric action one can be free from the improper tendencies (Pravṛtti) with which we are born and which cause repeated births and deaths. It is only when the heart is thus made pure that Brahmavidyā can be properly attained enabling the knower to attain Brahma. (This explanation has been given by Ramanuja Acharya. Sankaracharya has explained the above verse in a different manner.)

It is in heaven or hell that we get the reward or punishment for most of the good or evil acts which we do in this life. But even after completing our stay in heaven or hell there is a slight residue of previous Karma whose fruit still remains to be tasted. This residue Karma determines the circumstances in which we are born. This fact is mentioned in the Chhandogya Upanishad where the following passage occurs:—

तद्य इह रमणीयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते रमणीयां योनिमापद्येरन् ब्राह्मणयोनिं वा क्षत्रिययोनिं वा वैश्ययोनिं वाथ य इह कपूयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते कपूयां योनिमापद्येरञ्श्वयोनिं वा सूकरयोनिं वा चाण्डालयोनिं वा ॥ (V. X. 7.)

"Those who perform good acts are born in a good family e. g. that of a Brahman, a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya. Those who perform evil acts are born of bad parents e. g. dogs, swines or Chāṇḍālas."

Those who are born as Brahmans performed one kind of act in their previous life. Those who are born as Kṣatriyas performed in their previous lives another kind of act. For this reason Sāstras prescribe one kind of Karma for the Brahmans and another kind of Karma for the Kṣatriyas and another for Vaiśyas, yet another for Sūdras. This is the Fundamental principle of the Varṇāśrama Dharma. A Brahman will earn merit (Puṇya) if he performs the work which is prescribed for the Brahmans. But if a Kṣatriya performs the work prescribed for the Brahmans but not prescribed for the Kṣatriyas, he will commit an improper act (पाप). For this reason when Arjuna said, "I will not kill my relations in this battle. I would rather beg my living." Srī Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna: "Even if you kill your relatives in righteous war, you will earn merit, for, you are a Kṣatriya and the Sāstras lay down that it is the duty of the Kṣatriyas to take part in a righteous war. To earn one's living by begging is the proper act of a Brahman as prescribed in the Sāstras, a Brahman will earn merit if he does so; if a Kṣatriya flies from the field of battle and earns his living by begging, then he will commit a sin."

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत्।

"Arjuna, you should not give up the work which is born with you, even though the work may appear to be full of faults," which means that "as you are born a Kṣatriya, you should not give up fighting although it might involve the fault of killing."

The Gītā does not mention in detail all the different kinds of work which have to be performed in different circumstances. This is because the Gītā is not a treatise on Smṛti. The Smṛtis lay down in detail what action is proper or improper for different men in different circumstances. The Gītā has contented itself by merely laying down the fundamental principle of determining proper 'Karma', viz. that a man shall perform the Karma which is laid down for him in the Sāstras. The Gītā has also indicated briefly the different kinds of action prescribed for the four castes. It may be mentioned in this connection that it is clearly the intention of the Gītā that caste should be determined by birth. Unless caste is determined by birth it cannot be said, as Srī Kṛṣṇa said, "Arjuna, you are a Kṣatriya. To fight is your 'Swadharma'. If you run away from the battle-field and beg for your living, you will be committing a sin". If caste is not determined by birth, then the man who fights will be called a Kṣatriya, the man who worships and begs will be called a Brahman and there can be no question of a man neglecting his duty. Srī Kṛṣṇa says:—

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः।

"I have created the four castes according to the Division of Guṇa and Karma."

Some people interpret this passage to mean that caste should be determined by the Guṇa and Karma of the present birth. But this interpretation cannot stand the test of scrutiny. For, unless caste is determined by action in previous birth it cannot be said that a man will earn merit or demerit by performing any of the functions laid down for the four castes. It cannot also be otherwise said, "Do not give up the work with which you are born. You will earn demerit if you do so". For this reason it must be concluded that in the above line the Guṇa and Karma of the previous birth are referred to. What is meant is that God determines the caste in which each person will be born by the Guṇa and Karma of his previous life. Birth is not an accident. If the above passage is interpreted in this manner, then only can the passage be reconciled with the fundamental argument in the Gītā and the passage quoted above from the Upaniṣads.

The Lord said that one should do what is enjoined in the Sāstras. But what are these Sāstras ? The Sāstras consist of the Vedas, the Purāṇas, the Smṛtis and the Itihāsas (the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata are called the Itihāsas). The Vedas are the sources of the Hindu religion. But many portions of the Vedas are now lost. The intention of the lost Vedas has to be understood from the Purāṇas, Smṛtis and Itihāsas, which have been written by the Ṛṣis versed in the Vedas and which all follow the Vedas. Without supernatural knowledge it cannot be said what sort of action in a previous birth causes birth in which particular caste. Nor can it be said what particular course of action in this life can obviate the evil effects of action in the previous birth. If an action enjoined in the Sāstras appears to us to be wrong or if an action prohibited in the Sāstras appears to be good, then it must be understood that such ideas of ours are wrong and are due to our defective intelligence. Our mind is full of attachment and prejudice. For this reason good things sometimes appear to us to be bad and bad things appear to be good. The command of God can never be unjust. The Ṛṣis who recorded in the Sāstras the commands of God were completely free from attachment and prejudice and could have never misunderstood those commands.

We were so far considering the instructions of the Gītā as to what action should be done. The instructions of the Gītā on the proper method of performing the actions are also highly valuable, nay unique in the religious literature of the world. In the first place, even when we do our duty we must give up all attachment for the work. In other words, we should do our duty, not because we like to do it but because it is our duty to do it. * Attachment for duty also may be injurious, for, it may make us angry with people who may try to prevent us from doing our duty. In the second place, we must give up all desire for the fruit of our action.* Do your duty merely because you should do so. The result of your action lies in the hands of God. Your efforts will be successful if God pleases; if not, they will be baffled. But whether you succeed or not, your mind must not be ruffled in the least. When a Karmayogī does an act, his aim is the purification of his mind. If the action enjoined in the Sāstras is done properly, the mind will be freed from all desires, the attachment for the world will cease, and there will be no other object of desire except God. Even when we try to do good to others, we should think—"My powers are limited, my intellect is feeble, where is my ability to remove the misery of others ? How can I even know how to remove properly the miseries of others ? The powers of God are unlimited, His compassion is unbounded. I must not have the pride and foolishness to think that I shall remove a misery which He cannot remove. The reason why I try to do an act which I think will remove the misery of another is that it is the command of God that I should so act. If I try to do this duty, my desires will be reduced and my heart will become pure." The Gītā also says that when we do Karma we should not forget the true knowledge as to the real nature of our soul, which is different from the body, the senses and the mind. All action is done by the body, the senses and the mind. But the ignorant think that action is done by this soul. This misconception is due to अहङ्कार. § The wise should be free from such Ahaṃkāra. Although there should not be any attachment for the action, nor any desire for the fruit of the action, nor even the idea that I am doing any action, yet there should not be any diminution in the proper energy and efforts for the success

* तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

"Hence you should always do the proper action (but) without attachment."

* युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।

"The Yogi gives up the fruits of his acts and obtains permanent peace."

§ अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥

"The man who is blinded by egoism thinks 'I am the doer of the act.'"

of the work. Because the ideal Karmayogī must have the full amount of patience and energy*. For this reason he will generally be more successful in his efforts than others. Ordinarily, if a man is very energetic he has also attachment for the work and desire for its fruit. But attachment and desire, instead of helping in the success of his efforts, form positive impediments. The Karmayogī without diminishing his efforts gives up all attachment and desire. What he gives up increases the chance of success of his efforts.

Those who are for giving up all action say that every action is the source of bondage, because we must reap the fruit of every act. For this reason they are in favour of giving up all action. But the Gītā says that it is not possible to give up all action; for, if you do so, how will you be able to live ? † On the other hand, you cannot get rid of the fruit of an action merely by ceasing to perform it. If I give up taking food, but at the same time if I think about it in my mind, this thought will constitute an action of which I must reap the fruit. The Gītā reveals the hidden cause why we have to reap the fruit of our action. It is because of our attachment for the work, the desire for its fruit and the mistaken idea that we are the doers of the acts. If we can get rid of these things, then we shall not have to reap the fruit of our action. If the action enjoined in the Sāstras is done in this way, the heart becomes pure. We have not to reap the fruit of such action. On the other hand, such action frees us from the bonds of our previous actions.

We thus find what the Gītā has to say on the two questions referred to at the beginning of this article.

To the question, "What action should be performed ?", the Gītā replies, "We should perform the action which is enjoined in the Sāstras." To the other question, "How to perform action properly ?", the Gītā replies, "Perform your action without attachment for the action and the desire for its fruit. Remember also at the time of performing the action that it is the body or the senses which perform an action,—the soul does nothing. Nevertheless there should be the full amount of patience and energy when you perform an act."

Bhagavadgita.

By Sri Meher Baba.

The 'Bhagavadgītā' has exerted a tremendous spiritual influence upon the humanity at large. As the Blessed Lord, Srī Kṛṣṇa, was born a Hindu, the 'Gītā' is more often than never regarded as a sacred book of the Hindus; but, really speaking, it is a sacred book of not merely the Hindus but of the entire human race. The message that it contains was meant, not merely for India but for the whole world. Let mankind act in accordance with its message, and the universal brotherhood would surely be automatically brought about.

Those who cast doubts on the perfect sainthood of Srī Kṛṣṇa know not what they are doing. He was certainly a God-incarnate; and because He was a Sadguru, a Perfect Saint, He was successful in inundating the world with spirituality and lofty spiritual teachings.

नैव किंचित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।
"The wise Yogi thinks 'I do not do anything.'"

* मुक्तसंगोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः । सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥
"The *Sattvic* Doer is one who has no attachment, who is free from egoism, who is endowed with patience and energy and who is indifferent towards success or failure."

† शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ॥
"You cannot live if you give up all action."

The Best Sloka in the Gita.

By a Sannyasi.

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

(Gita XVIII. 65.)

"Think of Me (the Infinite Super-Self), devote yourself to Me, do all sorts of work for My sake, and bow down to Me. Then verily you shall attain to Me (realize the presence of the Super-Self within and all about you). I truly assure you of it because you are dear to me."

That the 'Sloka' quoted above is truly the very best, has been expressly told by Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself in the preceding stanza:—

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः ।

"Again hear from Me the precious advice, the most secret and sacred doctrine." In this connection Sridhara Swami in his commentary remarks thus:—

अतिगम्भीरं गीताशास्त्रमशेषतः पर्यालोचयितुमशक्नुवतः कृपया स्वयमेव तस्य सारं संगृह्य कथयति – सर्वगुह्यतममिति ।

"The Lord Himself explains the essential doctrine to those who are unable to dive into the profound depths of the Gītā."

It is also the concluding 'Sloka' in the well-known सप्तश्लोकी गीता, and therefore occupies the highest position of honour in the universally accepted sense. Hence this 'Sloka' can safely be regarded as the best one. The lesson taught herein is both practical and progressive. It is also soul-stirring and inspiring, as it has been uttered with all the emphasis of love.

Even the poorest and the humblest can thus serve God by earnestly bowing down to Him who is ever present everywhere. Those who are able-bodied can serve God by doing many kinds of work unselfishly for his sake—either esoteric forms of worship or selfless acts of charity for the common good of all. Those who have prayerful hearts may devote themselves to God for the salvation of all living beings by dedicating their whole lives to Him, while those who are highly spiritual can realize His presence in themselves as well as in all others by ever thinking of Him in calm contemplation.

According to the masterly interpretation by Parivrajaka Sri Krishnananda Swami, the great Hindu preacher and commentator of the 'Gītā', the term 'मद्याजी' summarises the system of कर्मयोग (Self-realization through action) as explained in the first six chapters; the term 'मद्भक्तः' covers the whole range of भक्तियोग (Self-realization through devotion) taught in the middle six chapters; and the expression 'मन्मनाः' refers to ज्ञानयोग (Self-realization through meditation) elaborated in the last six chapters of the 'Gītā.' The modes of revelation of God in man and in the universe are spoken "of here in the descending order ज्ञान, भक्ति and कर्म. Thus the spiritually wise, the holy-hearted and the earnest worker have been equally advised to do their respective part for the attainment of peace in life; while the most universal form of worship शरणागति (मां नमस्कुरु)—Self-resignation—is meant for all and is implied in "तमेव शरणं गच्छ" (Dedicate yourself to Him alone) and "मामेकं शरणं व्रज" (Do follow Me, the Super-Self).

Each 'Sloka' of the 'Gītā' is regarded as a 'Mantra' (a mystic formula), and as often as one repeats this well-known couplet, so often does one read the whole of the 'Gītā' every day, because it contains in a nutshell all the essential teachings of the 'Gītā' as well as of the Upaniṣads. However, it ever reminds him of the great lesson of Resignation

graciously taught by the Lord for all times and in all stages of life. This view of spiritual practice is so very universal that it is acceptable to all irrespective of sex or sect, race or religion.

This 'Sloka' also teaches the most secret (सर्वगुह्यतम) doctrine of 'Yoga'—the union of the Ego-self (जीव) with the Super-Self (ब्रह्म) by ever directing us to perform our action, devotion and meditation—whatsoever we do, feel and think—for Him alone and consciously to resign ourselves to the loving embrace of His who is the dearest to us all.

The Gita as a Gospel of Mysticism.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

Tne search for the noumenon, which is felt to be behind all physical and mental phenomena, is the task and the joy of the mystic temperament. He feels that the universe is the idea of God and the outflow of his bliss ('Ananda'). His method is that of intuition and introspection. God is to him not a postulate or a matter of demonstration but is a vision and a realization. Such mystic realization is stated by him to be the flower and fruit of all philosophy and religion. McTaggart says well: "All true philosophy must be mystical, not indeed in its methods but in its final conclusions." The mystic feels the spiritual unity and bliss of things and is engaged in a perpetual search for the soul of the Universe. This idea of the mystic is thus expressed by Virgil:

"Each breathing thing obeys One Mind's control,
And in all substances is a single soul."

"Tennyson's Higher Pantheism is full of the finest mystical feeling:

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the vision of Him who reigns !
Is not the vision He ?
Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands and feet."

This mystical realization of unity was born in India. Emile Burnouf says well : "The Aryan alone has been able to conceive being, thought and life in their absolute unity. He is, therefore, the true author of religion, and his earliest metaphysical book is the Veda". It is wrong to say that the Ṛgveda is a mere worship of the powers of nature. The phenomena of Nature in their highest manifestations were realized therein as the manifestation of the one Eternal, All-Pervading Beauty and Love and Bliss. Burnouf says again: "There was no reason why our ancestors should place the seat of power elsewhere than in the things which manifested it to their eyes; and by the very simplicity and purity of their observations they were forced to recognize God in every attribute of natural phenomena." The Ṛg-vedic declaration of "एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति" shows how the great seers of India rose to the conception of the spiritual unity of the universe. Apollonius of Tyana observed rightly that "while all wish to live in the presence of God, the Indians alone succeeded in doing so."

The mystic feels that God is the Unity of Truth (सत्यं) and Goodness (शिवं) and Beauty (सुन्दरं)—a unity in trinity and a trinity in unity. The Indian seers expressed the very essence of this idea by describing the Universal Soul as 'Sachchidānanda.' They rose to an even higher realization when they declared that the individual soul is one with the soul of the universe. The golden truth "तत्त्वमसि" (That thou art) expresses this supreme realization. In the 'Iśāvāsyopaniṣad' the mystic devotee beholds the glorious

golden orb of the sun and declares:

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह ।
तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि योऽसावसौ
पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥

"The face of the Eternal Truth is hidden by golden disc. O sun, remove it, so that I may have the vision whose essence is Reality. O Nourisher! O Supreme Risi! O controller of all! O Sun! O Lord of All! remove and withdraw Thy blinding rays, so that I may behold Thy most auspicious glory and forms; The Being in Thee is Myself."

The mystic knows that, unless we rise step by step in the ladder of love, we can never really rise to the height of the love of God, however much we may glibly talk about it. As Edmund Holmes says, "The purpose of love is to find a way of escape from self into the Infinite, into the life and the love of God. What do we mean by these words! To love God as God is impossible. If we are to love God, we must love something which seems to be less than God, love it unselfishly and whole-heartedly, and so transform our love of it into love of love, and therefore into love of God...If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" The 'Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad' declares that the lover is dear because of the blissful soul manifest in him:

न वा अरे सर्वस्य कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवत्या-
त्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति ।

In a soul so full of love's discipline will dawn the love of Love. The mystic's approach to God is primarily that of a beloved wife towards her beloved lord. As has been stated well in 'Dramidopaniṣad-Tātparya-Ratnāwali:'

भक्तिः शृंगारवृत्या परिणमति मुनेर्भावबन्धप्रथिम्ना ।
योगात्प्रागुत्तरा या स्थितिरिह विरहो देशिकास्तत्र दूताः ॥

"The devotion of the sage fructifies as love for the Beloved, because of the ascent of the passionate yearning. The penultimate state prior to union is separation. The Guru is the messenger bringing about the union."

The scripture goes even further and compares the love of the soul for the Over-soul to that of the maiden for her secret lover (योषा जारमिव प्रियम्). This example was taken to emphasise the quintessential sweetness of passionate yearning expressed by the word 'Mādhurya.' Evelyn Underhill says: "The feeling of love is the most ultimate conception that can be used in the characterisation of the Absolute." Bishop Gore says equally well: "As God is love, so where love is, God is, and the permanence of love in us means that we are permanently dwelling in God and God in us."

In the 'Bhagavadgītā' we have the finest expression of the highest mysticism. The Lord says that He is in the hearts of all ('सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टः', 'ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति') and that He is, in fact, the Soul of every one shining in his heart (अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः). He says that everything is strung on Him like gems threaded on a string (मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव). The whole is God (वासुदेवः सर्वमिति). The individual who knows and loves God is dear to God and is God Himself. ('प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः,' 'ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम्'). To him there is the infinite bliss of realization here and hereafter. (अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम्). He is in God and God is in him (मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्). The Lord gives us the nature of God and of the soul and their unity in clear and manifold ways. God is far and yet near (दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत्). The eternal nature of the soul is the theme of the second chapter of the 'Gītā.' By carrying out God's law, by meditating on Him, by loving Him and by knowing Him we can attain Him by His grace.

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥

He promises release from all sins. (अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः). To the priv-

ileged and blessed devotee He reveals His universal form ('Viśwarūpa) by giving the divine perception ('Divya Chakṣu). Nay, the soul realizes its oneness with God.

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥
भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥

The 'Gītā' is not content with affirmations of the Ultimate. It is equally insistent on the means. That 'Sānti' (peace) is of the essence of joy, is clearly declared by it—अशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् (II. 66). Nay, in the eighteenth chapter there is an acute analysis of the nature of bliss:—

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥

(XVIII. 37)

The Lord declares that the ethical life of 'Niṣkāma Karma' is the secret of peace and joy:—

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥
प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।

(II. 64, 65.)

He goes the length of saying that He is the rightful element of 'Kāma' (desire) in beings (धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ). Such desire alone can lead to desirelessness. Only a desireless mind can practise the supreme 'Yoga' and 'Bhakti' and attain the Supreme 'Jñāna', which alone can confer the bliss supreme.

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।
× × ×
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥

That state is an end in itself and is the 'summum bonum' of life.

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥

(III. 17.)

The Song of Gita.

By Rajendra Prasad, M. A., B. L.

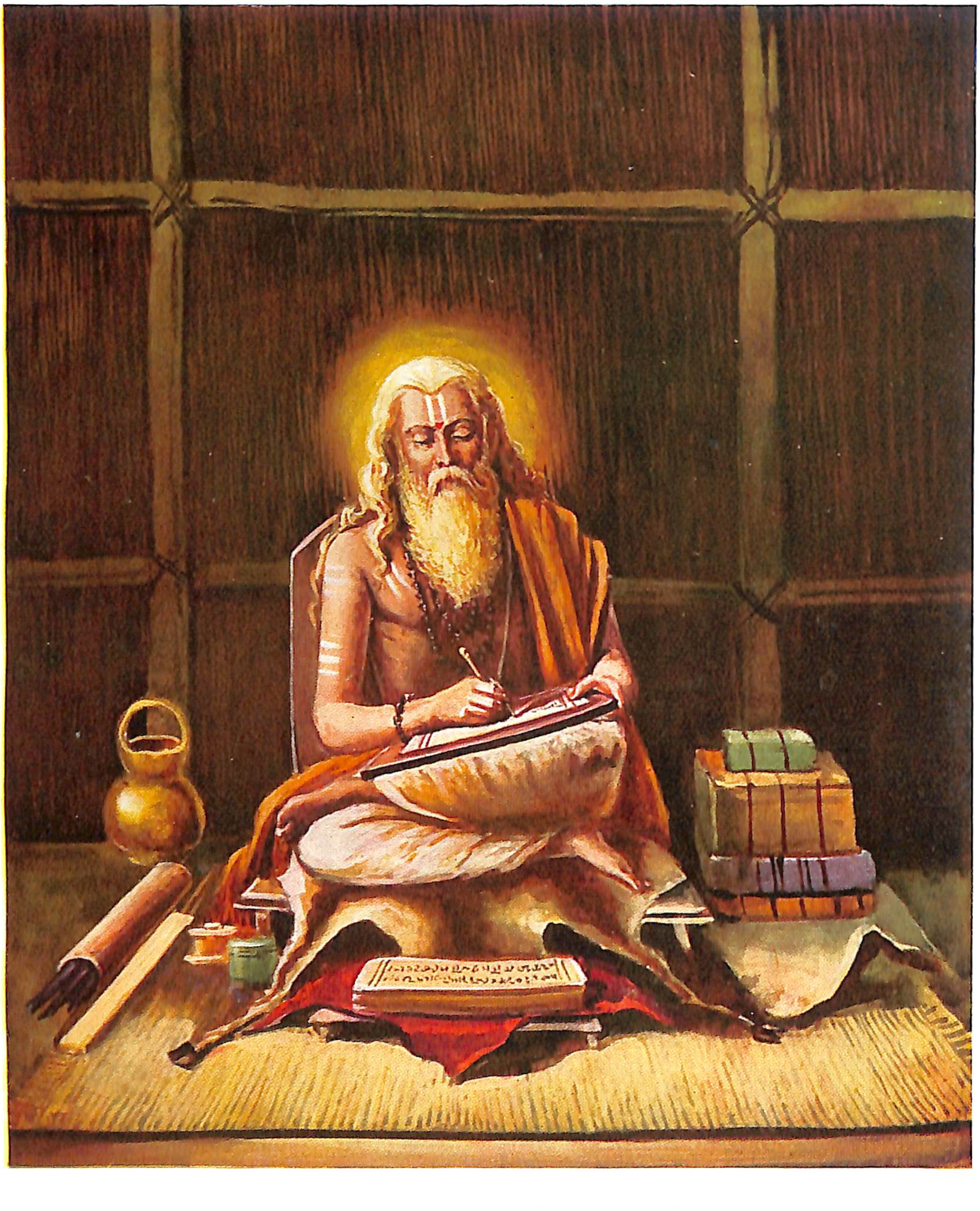
When to war were cousins driven,
Faithful hearts by envy riven,
Those who loved to hatred given,
Ye, O Krishna, Lord of Heaven,
Song of Gita sang.

When the heroes young and old,
In the battle firm and bold,
Gather'd there all deck'd in gold;
Ye, O God, in hero's mould,
Song of Gita sang.

When Thy wav'ring heroic friend,
Who disliked the battle's trend,
And on kinsmen shafts to bend;
Call of Duty to extend,
Song of Gita sang.

Soul immortal killeth not,
Ne'er it dies, ne'er doth rot;
Fight and win the hero's lot:
So to Arjuna then Ye taught;
Song of Gita sang.

All the teachings that Ye gave,
Many a heart from wreck doth save;
To men in town, to sage in cave,
Tossing on the Duty's wave,
Song of Gita sang.



Maharsi Vyāsa compiling the Gītā.

The Clarion Voice of the Gita.

By Swami Ramdas.

The 'Bhagavadgītā' is a veritable mosaic of Eternal wisdom. It has not left unsolved a single problem pertaining to the conduct of human life, both in its spiritual and physical spheres. For the highest truths of philosophy and also for a perfect light on the practical side of life, one has to go to this great work. The message of the entire 'Gītā' is to reveal the harmony and identity of soul with God and of God with Nature.

It must be within the experience of every student of the 'Gītā' that the majority of the commentators on this great scripture have drawn out such truths from it as would only coincide with their own views and predilections, and have presented them to the world as the whole secret of this many-sided and all-comprehensive mine of wisdom. Some read into the 'Gītā' an emphatic call to renounce all action in the world as the ultimate goal. Some others argue that the 'Gītā' holds devotion to a personal God as the essential creed of it. Some would have it that the 'Gītā' urges the soul to plunge into action, making it alone as the sole criterion and the one necessary condition of human existence. Again some others, taking the Mahābhārata war including the 'Gītā' as only an allegorical exposition of the eternal truths, interpret the teachings from their viewpoint as embodying an uncompromising cult of 'Ahiṃsā'. Each one of these expounders of the 'Gītā' is right from the angle of vision by which he has struggled to understand the scripture. But the whole truth enshrined in those eighteen chapters is all that they have said put together and much more besides. For an all-round authoritative, conclusive and comprehensive treatise on the 'Gītā', among the commentaries of the present day, one has to turn to the illuminating and inspiring volumes of "The Essays on the Gītā" by Sri Aurobindo.

To understand life and realize its glory integrally, one has to study the 'Gītā' in all its phases and from all standpoints. To have a partial view of a particular aspect of it alone, and to hold forth that as the whole truth has been the cause of imperfection in spiritual experience.

The purpose of the 'Gītā' is to proclaim that human life is essentially Divine—spiritually, mentally and physically. Its one aim is to prove that spirit and matter are one and the same. Activity in the world, whatever form it might take as circumstances and conditions demand, is not a thing to be shunned or renounced. What is needed is to Divinise life through the attainment of freedom from the individual sense by the mergence of it into God who is at once the soul, the universe and the all-transcendent and all-inclusive Truth.

The soul whose life is thus liberated, the 'Gītā' says, is utterly Divine in all its movements—significant as well as insignificant. Now action for him is but a natural and spontaneous flow of Divine energy through him. As God's supreme will determines, this energy works through him equally to create, to preserve and to destroy. Since this illumined personality intuitively bases his actions on the vision of the universal Reality and performs them in a state entirely bereft of the individual sense, they do not affect him for good or evil. So long as the soul misses this acme of attainment, he flounders in the morass of conflicting dualities—good and evil, virtue and sin, 'Ahiṃsā' and 'Hiṃsā', pleasure and pain.

The Divine 'Shakti' works in the universe both for constructive and destructive purposes. Only when the Supreme power acts in man through his lower nature, it is vitiated with greed,

lust and selfishness. In this state, in whatever manner he acts his works are tainted. For personal aggrandisement, such as for wealth, power and glory, he would launch into any kind of action irrespective of its nature as 'Ahiṃsā' or 'Hiṃsā'. Whereas the same Shakti, when She acts in a man freed entirely from every egoistic impulse or ambition, She does so for the uplift and protection of the oppressed and innocent humanity. Here Shakti may work through the purified medium or vehicle both creatively or destructively. Creation and destruction are concomitant movements. We can never separate them. Every new creation has at its basis the destruction of the old. This is the Law of Nature universally applicable. We cannot palliate, shirk or ignore this Law of God controlling all the activities of Nature including those of human beings. It is ever there, facing us at every turn. The saving grace for man in the field of action lies only in his acting as an instrument of the Divine—in a state of utter freedom from the touch and recoil of action. Here, what is essential is complete dedication of all life's actions to the will and power of the Almighty dwelling in the hearts of all beings, creatures and things. Else, if we move only in the vicious circle of harassing Dwandwas—good and evil—and attempt to cling to one of them for attainment of true freedom and peace, we can never reach the goal. Doubts and fears will ever rise in the mind of such a man, and he will become a scared creature, always a prey to impatience, suspicion and despair. Therefore, the command of Srī Kṛṣṇa is: Rise beyond the dualities, rise beyond the Dharmas of the Guṇas, i. e. rise beyond all conditioned states of existence conceived of and set as standards by the fettered mind and intellect, and be one with Me—the all-transcendent Reality—and then act in life as my instrument, as My 'Vibhūti', Myself revealed in and as your form and body. This is the deliverance that I offer you—this is the supreme blessedness in which I grant you the bliss of immortality.

Spontaneity of life born of an egoless purity and innocence and a consciousness of immortal freedom and a condition of perfect Divine ecstasy and peace is the one supreme note and refrain of the Voice that rings through the 'Gītā'.

The Glory of Indian Thought.

In the case of sacred eightfold path, Right faith, Right resolve, Right Speech and so on, who is to be arbiter of what constitutes Right ? The answer which is implied in Buddhism is given more categorically in the Bhagavadgītā wherein it is definitely stated that "man winneth not freedom from action by abstaining from activity nor by mere renunciation does he rise to perfection; but he whose works are all free from the mingling of desire, he who having abandoned attachment to the fruit of action, hoping for naught, his mind and self controlled, having abandoned all greed, performing action by the body alone, he doth not commit sin. It is this idea of lofty altruism, this idea of complete selflessness, this sublime indifference to the fruits of works, which is running like a golden thread through the ethical teaching of Buddhism and is repeated over and over again in the "Song of the Lord", is one of the outstanding glories of Indian thought."

—Lord Ronaldshay.

The Gita as a Manual of Hindu Eclecticism.

By Firoze Cowasji Davar, M. A., LL. B.

In matters social, political and particularly religious the modern age is one of individualism, wherein one feels himself free to shape his lot as he chooses unobstructed by external authority. Liberty has scarcely been talked of so much as at present, and free-will has never been at such a premium as it is to-day. Cultured men will now believe, not what they are compelled to swallow by the Church but what they think to be conducive to their own spiritual welfare. Eclecticism is not a religion, hardly even a school: it is only a mode of thought by which a person builds up his own religious philosophy by selecting thoughts and theories which he finds both good and great, from all religions. The eclectic principles of one are bound to differ from those of the other, because eclecticism is a strictly personal thing dependent on the individual's knowledge, circumstances and habits of life. Two eclectic scholars may exchange notes with mutual benefit, but they would never think of refuting or condemning the principles of each other; for both are seekers of the truth, and he only is entitled to refute another who has seen the Truth—whole and absolute. In this essay I propose to approach the 'Gītā' in the non-critical spirit of an eclectic to whom all roads lead to the City Celestial, but who would choose to be silent regarding things which do not appeal to him—rather than indulge in a vain refutation of the same.

A great period of creative literature is often followed by one of criticism, and after a great school of philosophy has run its career, it is generally succeeded by eclectics who, instead of creating something original themselves, take up the truths and theories already discovered by their predecessors, endeavour to reconcile their inconsistencies and try to unify them in the form of a system. The question when the 'Gītā' was presented to the world in its final form is unhappily still a mystery, though scholars seem to agree that the date cannot be later than the second century B. C. If this be so, the unknown writer of the 'Gītā', as we find it at present, must have elaborated the few teachings of Sri Kṛṣṇa that he must have discovered handed down to his times in the 'Mahābhārata.' By the second century B. C. a good many philosophies must have flourished in this "land of philosophers," and my object here is to show that the writer of the 'Gītā' was eclectically inclined, and that he harmonized and wove into a system the truths of various creeds which were found floating in his times. Pope's "Essay on Man" is not superb poetry, but our reason of its vast popularity is that it is truly eclectic, its author having versified the philosophic truths of thinkers of different times and countries, so that readers of various mental tendencies are satisfied to find something or the other to appeal to their tastes and aptitudes. Tennyson's "In Memoriam" will always be read with raptures, but Pope's "Essay on Man", though far inferior as poetry, will oftener be consulted. One ignorant of Sanskrit like myself cannot be expected to pass opinion on the stylistic merits of the 'Gītā', though experts in the subject have been found to soar into transports of delight over its language; while there are many who have the little volume by heart. But, apart from other considerations, the one great cause of the wide popularity of the 'Gītā' is to be sought in its eclectic welding together of various schools of Hindu thought into 700 verses which present in a nutshell the message of Aryan culture to the world. To trace the numerous systems of Hindu philosophical thought in the 'Gītā' would tax the abilities even of a profound scholar. Being a Zarathushtrian and a student of Persian, I am painfully conscious of my obvious limitations; but a perfunctory attempt is made below to

present a bare outline, a mere skeleton, which may be filled up with flesh and blood and animated with the breath of life by a master-philosopher or an inspired genius.

Let us now see what essential truths of Hinduism are harmonized in the 'Gītā'. This work, in the first place, acknowledges the supremacy of the Vedas in spite of their polytheism: though it does not preach Nature-worship, it still retains the Devas (gods or Shining Ones), subordinating them, however, to the Infinite and the Eternal 'Brahma', the One without a second. In a verse breathing tolerance for the Devas, Sri Kṛṣṇa says in the Gītā IX. 23: "Even the devotees of other Shining Ones, who worship full of faith, they also worship Me, O son of Kunti, though contrary to the ancient rule." Again, the Lord says in IX. 25: "They who worship the Shining Ones go to the Shining Ones; to the Ancestors (Pitṛs) go the Ancestor-worshippers; to the Elements (Bhūtas, Elementals or nature-spirits) go those who sacrifice to Elementals; but My worshippers come unto Me." Vedism worshipped the Devas who were generally deposed from their place of pride in later Vedānta; but the 'Gītā' reconciles this conflict by holding that these Devas are but forms of the great Eternal. Thus the 'Gītā' harmonizes the polytheistic tendencies of the masses with the monotheism of the Upaniṣads. But the 'Gītā' proceeds further still and gives us a personal God who lives and moves and has His being in our hearts as well as in the Universe. This God becomes all the more intimate with his Hindu worshippers when identified with the great and lovable personality of Sri Kṛṣṇa. As Mr. Howells observes in "The Soul of India", the Supreme Being of the 'Gītā' is not merely the abstract Absolute of the 'Vedānta' nor even the anthropomorphic tyrant of popular faith, but a God who can be loved, known and adored.

The Vedic people could boast of a very minute ritual and offered sacrifices on an elaborated scale. To such an extent were sacrifices indulged in that one of the chief injunctions of Buddha was to abolish the custom altogether. The 'Gītā' does not reject sacrifice, but gives it a different and ennobling connotation. It holds that life itself is a huge sacrifice, a consecration to an ideal, a resignation to one Divine Will. God is not pleased so much with sacrifices of animals bleeding to death but by the self-sacrifice of the devotee himself, as expressed in his works and duties, which he must discharge to the end of his days for the welfare of the world. The 'Gītā' says in III. 9: "The world is bound by action, unless performed for the sake of sacrifice; for that sake, free from attachment, O son of Kunti, perform thou action." In III. 14 the Lord observes: "From food creatures become: from rain is the production of food; rain proceedeth from sacrifice; sacrifice ariseth out of action." The Vedic sacrifices were offered on particular occasions only; the 'Gītā' desires us to offer ourselves every moment of our lives. The Vedic people offered their sacrifices with an eye to ulterior rewards in heaven: the sacrifice of works demanded by the 'Gītā' should be entirely disinterested and selfless, being duty for the sake of duty and in the interests of humanity at large. Thus by a happy change of significance the 'Gītā' preserves the Vedic "Sacrifice" and, without endeavouring to refute it, adapts it to its own purpose by assigning to it a loftier mission to fulfil.

But the glory of Hinduism lies in the Upaniṣads, and the great contribution that the Hindus have made to the spiritual lore of the world is through the little Vedantic saying 'तत्त्वमसि' (That art Thou). It preaches that man and God are not two different entities but one, and that man's sole function in the world is to be alive to this great truth by removing from his heart the veil of ignorance. We see God everywhere in the universe, in trees, rocks, rivers, caves; in animals, birds, in all humankind and in ourselves. We eat God in our food, drink Him in our water, embrace Him in our son, spurn Him in all wicked things and worship Him in all noble ones. Never has a more consoling doctrine been preached to humanity than the thought that the cherished goal of

our ambition through various births and rebirths is not the dreaded and omnipotent Lord dwelling in the vastness of space but the "Antaryāmi" whose kingdom is always within us. Who would think of doing an evil turn to another, if he has once realized that the same God that is within him is also present in the other person ? Admit only this and we bind the whole universe to our hearts with hoops of steel. The 'Gītā', as it may be expected, is thoroughly inspired by this sublime thought of "Adwaita" (non-duality or monism) from start to finish. Srī Kṛṣṇa says in the 'Gītā' VI. 29: "The self, harmonized by 'Yoga', seeth the Self abiding in all beings, all beings in the Self; everywhere he seeth the same." So, too, the Master says in X. 39: "And whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that am I, O Arjuna; nor is there aught, moving or unmoving, that may exist bereft of Me."

Christian authors seem to suggest that the 'Gītā' is inferior to the New Testament, since the former contains no injunctions about love for our fellow-men. We should reply that if the word "love" is not found in the 'Gītā' it is because this work can boast of something higher than love. The 'Gītā' does not talk of love but of identity, not of fellowship but of the essential unity of mankind as reflecting the Divinity within them. If love has not been mentioned in the 'Gītā', it is because the theory of monism is so comprehensive as to take the existence of love for granted when it preaches the oneness of humanity, of Nature and of God. So, too, if the Jainas object that there is not much of non-violence in the 'Gītā', our reply would be couched in similar terms. The same great theory of monism covers a multitude of such virtues. As Swami Vivekananda says: "To every man this is taught: thou art one with this Universal Being, and, as such, every soul that exists is your soul; and every body that exists is your body; and in hurting anyone you hurt yourself; in loving anyone you love yourself."

But the 'Gītā' is above all a gospel of duty and is preached to an energetic man of action, Arjuna. Being a Kṣatriya, he is asked by Sri Kṛṣṇa to discharge his duty as a warrior and prepare for fight, remembering that he and his enemies are but various limbs of the One Great God. The words of the 'Gītā' in II. 19 and 20 are memorable: "He who regardeth this (the dweller in the body) as a slayer, and he who thinketh he is slain, both of them are ignorant. He slayeth not, nor is he slain. He is not born, nor doth he die; nor having been, ceaseth he any more to be; unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient, he is not slain when tne body is slaughtered." Emerson had these verses of the 'Gītā' in mind when he put the following lines in the mouth of Brahma in his poem of the same name:—

"If the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not then my subtle ways,
I come and pass and turn again.
They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings,
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings."

It is said there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous and on reading Emerson's poem the versatile Mr. Andrew Lang, himself a writer, among other things, on religion and mythology, wrote the following piece of nonsense verse:—

"If the wild bowler thinks he bowls,
Or if the batsman thinks he is bowled,
They know not, poor misguided souls,
They too shall perish unconsoled.
I am the batsman and the bat,
I am the bowler and the ball,
The umpire, the pavilion cat,
The roller, pitch and stumps and all."

We cannot say how far Mr. Lang is justified in waxing facetious on religious matters; but it is true that a parody is always an indirect compliment to the original, for mediocre compositions have never deserved the honour of a parodist's attentions. We have read parodies on Tennyson and Browning but not on Pomfret and Falconer, whose very

names are unknown to the majority. We may therefore conclude that the great theory of monism as popularised by the 'Gītā' is so universally known as to be recognized both by poets and humourists in the West, though the idea itself is so elevating as to inspire a true devotee to prayer than to parody.

It may also be observed that the 'Gītā' is not only pure monism but is an attempt to gratify the believers in qualified monism as well by placing in the Eternal His Supreme Prakṛti (as we shall see later on) manifested in the form of the human soul, and preaches as our goal the habitation in the Lord rather than the annihilation in the Infinite. Nay, the 'Gītā' displays a broad-minded catholicity which may be sought without much success in other Hindu scriptures. It preaches that religion is not a cult but a culture, not the monopoly of the arbitrary priests but an unfenced expanse, wide as the universe, and free of access to one and all like wind and waves. The Lord says in the 'Gītā' V. 18: "Sages look equally on a Brahman adorned with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, and even a dog and a 'Svapāka' (the lowest class of outcastes)." In the same vein of tolerance Sri Kṛṣṇa observes in IX. 32: "They who take refuge with Me, O Pārtha, though of the womb of sin, women, Vaiśyas, even Sūdras, they also tread the highest path."

Two great principles have been laid down in all great religions by which man can tread the path of salvation. They are the "Pravṛtti-Mārga" and the "Nivṛtti-Mārga". The former is the path of science, culture, prosperity and progress, and one of its ablest exponents is Zarathushtra: the latter preaches peace, renunciation, resignation and asceticism, and is remarkably represented by Buddhism, Jainism and Mediæval Christianity. Both are paths that enable the devotee to manifest the highest within him. Both are as necessary to the world as shine and shade, work and rest. Both present two different aspects of the Truth, and God has vouchsafed a religion to every country, suited in either of these respects to its time, place, and circumstances. The Hindu religion, itself as vast as an ocean, contains both these principles and has been interpreted in the light of Progress or Peace according to the views of different expounders. The Vedas betray a Progressivist tendency, but from them the writers of the Upaniṣads were driven to the conclusion of the Nivṛtti-Mārga. Even Buddha, Mahāvira and Saṃkara, in spite of mutual differences, chimed in with the Upaniṣadic conclusion; while Madhva and Vallabha were men with pronounced Progressivist tendencies. One of the most potent reasons of the greatness and popularity of the 'Gītā' is that it has reconciled the two great paths and harmonized the "Karma-Kāṇḍa" and "Jñāna-Kāṇḍa" in itself.

Sri Kṛṣṇa emphatically lays down the efficacy of actions in the 'Gītā' V. 2 in the following words: "Renunciation and 'Yoga'-by action, both lead to the highest bliss; of the two, 'Yoga' by action is verily better than renunciation of action." But action is not to be pursued for material ends; for with equal emphasis the Gītā observes in VI. 33: "Better than the sacrifice of any objects is the sacrifice by way of wisdom, O Parantapa. All actions in their entirety, O Pārtha, culminate in wisdom." Subsequently the Lord preaches the path of devotion in XI. 54: "But by devotion to Me alone I may thus be perceived, Arjuna, and known and seen in essence and entered, O Parantapa." And finally in XVIII. 66 the Master shows how all duties and actions must terminate in Him in the following memorable words: "Abandoning all duties, come unto Me alone for shelter; sorrow not, I will liberate thee from all sins." By this wonderful mixture of 'Karma', 'Jñāna' and 'Bhakti' the Gītā favours the discharge of duty to the last, but holds that the aspirant must be spiritually illuminated and thoroughly resigned to the Divinity. It gratifies the Upaniṣads by considering 'Jñāna' as indispensable to salvation: it is equally agreeable to the Bhāgavata creed or the Kṛṣṇa-cult which developed from the 'Bhakti' element of the 'Gītā'. Above all, the 'Gītā' emphasises 'Karma', thus preventing the devotee

from lapsing into passivity, and enabling him to become a useful member of society.

Though the 'Gītā' is said to have assumed its final shape in the 2nd century B. C., and was perhaps written with the object of refuting Buddhism, still there is no denying the fact that it agrees with that religion in one important respect. When the Lord Buddha realized that all mankind will not or cannot take to the stern discipline of the ascetic, he was constrained to divide his followers into monks and laymen, with the important reservation that the life of a layman, however good and benevolent, would entail rebirth, which would be extinguished into the Pari-Nirvanic stage only by a life of complete renunciation practised by the ascetic. For the layman class Buddha establishes his noble eightfold path, comprising the following virtues:—right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right exertion, right mindfulness and right meditation. Buddhism is rich in its moral precepts, the underlying principle of which is moderation. Now this is precisely the keynote of the 'Gītā', whose aim is not to turn out "Bhikkhus" (monks) but men of the world who are at the same time men of God as well. The Gītā says in VI. 16: "Verily 'Yoga' is not for him who eateth too much, nor who abstaineth to excess, nor who is too much addicted to sleep, nor even to wakefulness, O Arjuna." The 'Gītā' always dwells on the virtue of the golden mean and is always, in Tennyson's language,

> "*Turning to scorn with lips divine*
> *The falsehood of extremes!*"

It advocates the leading of a temperate life and says in II. 48: "Perform action, O Dhananjaya, dwelling in union with the divine, renouncing attachments and balanced evenly in success and failure: equilibrium is called Yoga." Thus secular Buddhism will find its essence reflected in the spirit that runs throughout the 'Gītā'.

The Gītā has also woven within it the principle of the 'Sāṃkhya' philosophy of Kapila, but with certain material differences. Kapila conceived this universe as being sustained by the mutual interaction of two forces—Puruṣa (Spirit) and Prakṛti (Matter or Nature). Prakṛti has produced everything in the universe except the soul which has a separate existence. The Prakṛti is ever trying to entrap the Puruṣa in its coils, but the mission of life is for the Puruṣa to see that the fly is not entangled in the spider's web. The 'Gītā' preserves this duality of Puruṣa and Prakṛti as seen in XIII. 20: "Know thou that Matter (Prakṛti) and Spirit (Puruṣa) are both without beginning; and know thou also that modifications and qualities (Guṇas) are all of Matter(Prakṛti) born." According to the 'Sāṃkhya', the 'Puruṣa' has to realize itself and to know that it is distinct from Prakṛti; and this method of 'Jñāna' is the path of salvation. The 'Gītā' adopts this method of 'Jñāna', which is peculiar to both the 'Sāṃkhya' and the Upaniṣads. But while the 'Sāṃkhya' reposes in philosophic atheism, the 'Gītā' is monotheistic, making at the same time some concessions to the Vedic polytheism still lingering in the masses. According to the 'Sāṃkhya', the 'Puruṣa and 'Prakṛti' are both uncreated and independent; while, according to the Gītā, Spirit and matter are not independent, but behind them there stands the Eternal. The 'Sāṃkhya' teaches that Souls (Puruṣas) are many; while, according to the 'Vedānta', the 'Puruṣa' can only be one and there cannot be any individual souls. Thus, while 'Vedānta' is monistic, the 'Sāṃkhya' remains frankly dualistic. But the 'Gītā' with its eclectic tendencies has, in the words of Sri Aurobindo, subtly reconciled the theistic, pantheistic and monistic views of the universe. While other one-sided systems rush to the one extreme or the other and fail to see the truth that lies in the whole, the 'Gītā' has a broad, catholic and synthetic grasp of the matter. Mr. Surya Rao has summed up this side of the question very ably when he says that, though the 'Gītā' is influenced by the 'Sāṃkhya',

it does not give way to irresolvable dualism; though it accepts the spiritual monism of the 'Vedānta', it does not lose faith in Nature; and though it believes in the Eternal, it admits the possibility of incessant change.

The 'Gītā' is also alive to the efficacy and importance of the 'Yoga', which goes by works as the 'Sāṃkhya' goes by 'Jñāna' and 'Tyāga' (renunciation). The 'Gītā' is not a mere book for scholars interested in philosophical flights, but it is a practical manual of the spiritual life to be led by following 'Yoga'. But here, too, there is a difference between the traditional 'Yoga' of Patanjali and the Yoga enunciated in the 'Gītā'. The system of Patanjali is a stern discipline of which the eight limbs are—continence, contentment, posture, breath-control, control of the senses, concentration, meditation and super-consciousness. The 'Yoga' wishes to train the mind through disciplining the body. This system has enabled India to give some of her greatest Yogis to the world. It is, however, beset with peculiar dangers, and in less responsible hands it has degenarated, as R. C. Dutt reminds us, into cruel and indecent Tāntric rites. But the 'Gītā' embraces the 'Yoga' after giving it quite a different mission to perform. According to the 'Gītā', work and duty are the main characteristics of the 'Yoga', as the Lord Kṛṣṇa says in II. 50: "Therefore cleave thou to 'Yoga'; 'Yoga' is skill in action." Again, in V. 2 Srī Kṛṣṇa clearly says: "Renunciation and 'Yoga' by action, both lead to the highest bliss; of the two, 'Yoga' by action is verily better than renunciation of action." Thus, while according to Patanjali works are necessary only at a preliminary stage, the author of the 'Gītā' by a clever handling of the term makes work and duty the most important and indispensable part of the 'Yoga.'

It has often been said that the 'Gītā' contains the essence of the Upaniṣads, that the Upaniṣads are the cow, Kṛṣṇa the milker, Arjuna the calf, the devotee, the drinker of the milk, and the 'Gītā', the milk itself. But, as we have seen, the Upaniṣads are not the only books to be drawn upon by the 'Gītā.' As Telang profoundly remarks, the 'Gītā' may be compared to the movement of Raja Ram Mohan Roy while Buddhism may stand comparison with the movement of Keshub Chandra Sen. Raja Ram Mohan was nothing if not eclectic and tried to eleborate the nobler aspects of old beliefs in his Brahma Samaj, which reveals as much of Hinduism as it contains at its best. Keshub Chandra played fast and loose with orthodox Hinduism, and, when the helm of the Samaj came into his hands he made innovations which would have made his predecessor stare and gasp. The 'Gītā', it is true, is not revolutionary and destructive, but eclectic and constructive, and crystallizes the best materials of the Hindu religion as it was two centuries before the birth of Christ. The Upaniṣads, says Max Muller, do not contain any philosophical system but are only guesses at truth; the 'Gītā', which aims to present the essence of the Upaniṣads, is also characterised by the guesses at truth, which are however unified and reconciled so as to appeal to people of all shades of religious opinion. It is precisely these "Guesses" or "medley of beliefs" of which the 'Gītā' is composed in the opinion of Prof. Hopkins, that can successfully accout for the inconsistencies of that work. This, too, will further go to show the eclectic nature of the book, since eclectic systems, if at all they deserve that name, are generally loose and irregular, because of the speculations and "guesses at truth" which have often to be revised and remoulded in the light of further knowledge. Thus the 'Gītā' is capable of appealing to minds of the most divergent tendencies, touching Zarathushtrianism on the one hand and Buddhism on the other. The 'Gītā' is not merely pure or qualified monism, not mere 'Sāṃkhya' or 'Yoga,' not merely the path of Progress or Peace: it is 'all' and much more, comprehending the various features of Hinduism in a loose but thoroughly exhaustive system.

Modern civilization is proceeding at breakneck speed, and science has shown

us more miracles than religion has recorded or tradition invented. It has come true that the ideals of one age are the commonplaces of next, and the idols of one epoch go down before the iconoclastic zeal of the other. In this modern whirligig of infinite creation and infinite destruction, our political and national, social and literary landmarks are in danger of rapid effacement, and even our religious beliefs receive rude shocks at the hands of science. It is impossible for cultured hearts to derive entire satisfaction till nationalism widens into internationalism and religion ignores its shallow fanaticism and becomes truly catholic, universal and eclectic. The various countries of the world are drawn so near by the annihilation of time and space owing to recent scientific developments, that fanaticism and exclusiveness in religion will perforce, by sheer stress of circumstances, have to give way to tolerance and eclecticism. Mr. Nanalal D. Kavi in his Gujarati lecture on "Some features of Indian History" remarks with his usual insight that the coming world-race and world-civilization will be the harmonization of world-races and world-civilizations. In that case people will turn with redoubled zeal to the message of Srī Kṛṣṇa as embodied in the 'Gītā', the true manual of Hindu eclecticism, and men who control the destinies of nations will turn for inspiration to the teaching of the Song Celestial, which, we venture to say, deserves to be designated the text-book of future civilization.

The Gita.

By P. Seshadri, M. A.

Hinduism is so extensive in its philosophical and religious literature that the student of theology is often bewildered by its vastness and finds it difficult to refer to any volume which may be looked upon as the embodiment of its highest principles. The 'Gītā' is, however, the nearest approach to such a document and there is perhaps no better insight into the heart and soul of Hinduism than this discourse presented in the form of a dialogue between Srī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, but really meant for all mankind.

The softness and even effeminacy which has been such a marked feature of Indian life in its decadence could never have come upon the country, if the exalted teachings of the 'Gītā' had been kept in mind. Nowhere has the doctrine of strict and unswerving adherence to Duty been preached with such effect, and it has a message and philosophy which lies at the foundation of all individual and national greatness. There is no greater happiness than the performance of one's duties in a pure spirit of righteousness, saving oneself the disappointment which may often be caused by the expectation of reward. What is true of the individual is also true of the nation, and what greater guarantee can there be for the success and prosperity of a people than the pursuit of such an ideal ?

If the central teaching of the 'Gītā' sometimes seems too philosophical for the understanding of the average man in the street, it is still intensely human, dominated as it is by the two great personalities of the 'Mahābhārata', Arjuna in the capacity of a devout pupil and Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa as his loving teacher. We are all in various ways confronted in every-day life with the very problem with which Arjuna was faced on the field of 'Kurukṣetra', and it will be our own fault if we did not get the right inspiration from the proper quarter in our conflict between inclination and duty.

Karmayoga in the Gita and the modern theory of action.

By Hanumanprasad Poddar.

'Karmayoga' or the Path of Action has been pronounced in the 'Gītā' as superior or preferable to the Path of Renunciation ('Karma-Sannyāsa')—'तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते' ('Gītā' V. 2). Nay, those who tread this path are, it is stated, liberated from the bonds of transmigration (जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः) and the highest state of immortal bliss is vouchsafed to them (पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम्) [vide 'Gītā' II. 51]. Now the question is, Is this Path of Action as propounded in the 'Gītā' the same as the theory of action talked of so much in the modern times? The enlightened men of the world of to-day are mad after action. They never stop even for a moment during their whole life-time, nor do they deem it necessary, to bother themselves about the following and such like questions: What is God? What is His Creative Nature or 'Prakṛti' as it is called in Hindu terminology? What is the real nature of the world as we see it? Who are we and wherefrom have we come? They consider it as sheer waste of time to devote any thought to these topics and are busy day and night in advancing the material prosperity of their own community and country in particular and of the world at large in general, and in procuring worldly enjoyments and partaking of them, material advancement being their highest ideal. There are people who believe or seek to prove that it is this type of 'Karmayoga' that has been preached in the 'Gītā'. That is why they have no hesitation in dubbing them Karmayogis who are ceaselessly working in an interested way for self-aggrandisement or for advancing the material interests of others, and seek to support their claim by quoting verses from the 'Gītā'. A careful consideration of this question has therefore become imperative.

THE MODERN THEORY OF ACTION

There is a wide divergence of views regarding the meaning of the modern theory of action, which is not yet fixed. At its very best it is represented thus:—

Action is the key to human progress: it is through action that man can relieve his own suffering as well as that of others, including his country and make the world happy. Hence one should depend on no one else even to the smallest degree and should always remain engaged in action. Action alone can rid the world of its miseries. Hence every one should work with indefatigable energy and with ever new vigour and zeal, undaunted by troubles and hardships. This is what constitutes the duty of a human being.

Actions comprised under this head are of various kinds. Some are of opinion that science alone can lead to all-round progress. The railway, steam-ships, telegraph, telephone, wireless, aeroplanes and other marvels of the present day and other necessaries of life which have afforded facilities in all the departments of life, are a product of science. Besides these, science has invented a number of defensive and destructive weapons whereby we can easily defend ourselves and extirpate our enemy and can lead an easy and comfortable life, enjoying sense-enjoyments of various kinds. Hence we should apply ourselves to the work of promoting the cause of scientific investigation.

There are others who plead that science has made man luxurious, rapacious, and partial. It is science which is responsible for the advent of machinery, and the latter in its turn has brought into existence the institutions of capitalism and labour. The result has been that

wealth has found its way into the hands of a few individuals and a large section of the rest of the humanity is starving. Hence we should bid adieu to science, end the noxious machine-civilization, resuscitate village-life and reconstruct it on a reformed basis. The welfare of all lies in this.

There are still others who urge that legislation, armament and implements of war are imperative for the defence of the country, so that we should concentrate our energies on strengthening these; whereas there is a fourth class who believe that all these are prejudicial to the best interests of the world, and are therefore opposed to their augmentation. Some believe in imperialism whereas others pin their faith in democracy. Some believe that disparity is good, while others desire full equality for all in all matters.

The world of to-day has thus riveted its hopes on action in its various forms and may be said to be a worshipper of action and of those engaged in action. All these, who have been referred to above, may differ in the line of their action, but they are one in this respect that none of them has any place for God or religion in their respective schemes. If at all we hear God and religion mentioned anywhere in a suppressed voice, they are only intended to serve our secular ends. As a matter of fact, the vast majority of those who have been educated on western lines are somewhat of the opinion that indulging in talk of God and religion is not only sheer waste of time but leads to degeneration. We should therefore rid ourselves of these antiquated beliefs and old-world superstitions and pin our faith in the up-to-date theories of the modern age. It is such like ideas that are fast gaining ground to-day, and the result is world-wide revolution and discontent. The irony of the whole thing is that activities tending to such revolution and unrest are being styled as 'Karmayoga' and those who are engaged in such activities day and night are being called Karmayogīs. This is, in brief, what is understood by the modern theory of action.

A COMPARISON OF KARMAYOGA AS PREACHED IN THE GITA WITH THE ABOVE THEORY OF ACTION.

Now let us consider what goes by the name of 'Karmayoga' in the Gītā. Nowhere does the 'Gītā' denounce action for the good of some individual, community, country or the world at large. On the contrary, it enjoins upon us to perform our legitimate duties and to work for the good of all creatures. Of course, the 'Gītā' does not attach so much importance to the nature of work that falls to the lot of a particular individual as to the motive and spirit of the doer. An action may be mild or severe, favourable or unfavourable in the eyes of the public; nay, one may be called upon to make love or battle, to enjoy sense-objects or to renounce them, his action will be classed as 'Karmayoga' if it is characterised by wisdom, devotion and evenness of mind. The Lord says in the 'Bhagavadgītā':—

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥

(XVIII. 46)

"He from whom (all) beings have emanated and by whom this entire universe is pervaded (in other words, who stands revealed in the form of this universe), by worshipping Him in his own duty a man winneth perfection."

The above couplet expounds action accompanied by wisdom and devotion. It will have to be borne in mind that God Himself stands projected in the form of the universe and that man has to worship Him; in fact, all actions are intended to adore Him. Not only prayer, penance, study of scriptures and worship but whatever constitutes the legitimate duty of an individual, will form as a means of worshipping God. For Arjuna, who was a Kṣatriya (one belonging to the warrior class), war in a righteous cause was a legitimate duty. God in the shape of all-devouring Death had to be worshipped on the field of battle by shedding the blood of outrageous enemies. Tulādhara, who was a Vaiśya (a

trader), worshipped God through trade. Dharmavyādha, who was a pious fowler, as his very name signifies, worshipped God through service, whereas the sage Yājñavalkya worshipped Him through renunciation and wisdom. The royal sage Janaka worshipped Him through governance of his kingdom. Similarly, a Brahmachārī (a student) should worship God through his studies and attendance on his preceptor. It is not essential that the means of worship should be the same in every case. What is required is a devout heart. If the worshipper performs his legitimate duties with a sense of the true nature of God and simply with a view to worshipping Him—in a spirit of sacrifice and for the sake of God, not for the sake of any reward and without attachment, his actions will be classed as 'Karmayoga'. It should be remembered that a Karmayogī of this type is incapable of actions which are of a sinful nature or run counter to the interests of the general public. One who has partaken of nectar would sooner die than a Karmayogī of the type mentioned in the Gītā would harm anyone.

It is this very 'Karmayoga' that has been expounded in the following verses of 'Srīmad Bhagavadgītā:—

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥
योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

(II. 47-48)

"Thou hast a right to perform actions but hast no control over their consequences; so let not the reward of actions be thy motive, nor be thou to inaction attached."

"Perform actions, O Dhanañjaya, dwelling in Yoga (union with the divine), i. e., with thy mind ever fixed on God, renouncing attachments and balanced in success and failure. (The fruit lies in the hands of God; whatever reward lies in store for him under His dispensation is all that can be desired. His duty, therefore, is to keep his mind ever fixed on Him and to make his actions conform to His will.) This equilibrium constitutes what is called Yoga."

In fact, man has a right only to perform actions: he has no control over their consequences. No one can claim to achieve a particular end by sheer force of action. A husbandman can only plough his fields and sow the seed therein. But the crop is not within his power. Even a bumper crop which is ripe for being cut down is liable to be destroyed by drought, excessive rainfall, rats, locust swarms, frost and so on. None the less it behoves him to till the grounds and scatter the seeds; for the same lies in his power and constitutes his duty. Here it may be asked: "When the fruit does not lie in our hands, why should we engage in action at all ? Whatever is going to happen will surely happen, even if we remain sitting idle." The Lord has anticipated this question when He warns us not to be attached to inaction; for man has been authorised to perform actions. Even though every single event in the world takes place in accordance with the Divine Will—everything that is happening every moment is only His 'Līlā,' He makes man His instrument in carrying out His purpose. That is why he has been authorised to perform actions. The Kauravas had already been slain by the Lord, who showed them all as ground into powder between the terrible jaws of His universal form; they would not have escaped death even if Arjuna refused to act as His instrument; but it was through his instrumentality that the Lord brought about their end. Hence it is necessary that man should perform actions according to his capacity, but should not expect any reward for the same. Of course, there can be no action without a motive, hence human action too must have some motive behind it. He may make money by trade, may come out victorious in battle, may be cured of his ailment by taking medicine—these are the motives even of a 'Karmayogi' in carrying on trade, engaging in warfare and undergoing medical treatment respectively. He seeks the fruition of his activities, no doubt; but he is indifferent as to their actual result. Whether he

obtains money or not, whether he is victorious or is vanquished, whether he is cured of his disease or the same is aggravated, is all the same to him. For he does not work under the impulse of attachment and ambition. His actions are not guided by desires: they are inspired by God and he performs his duties, nay, discharges his obligations simply with a view to worshipping God thereby. Whether he assumes the reins of a kingdom or renounces the world, he does so for the sake of God. In short, 'Karmayoga' as preached in the 'Gītā' consists in working in harmony with God, renouncing all forms of attachment and with an attitude of indifference towards pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat. This is characterised by a knowledge of the all-pervasiveness of God, a feeling of devotion to Him and a total indifference to the fruit of actions. Even so does the Lord proclaim at the very beginning of His discourse:—

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

(*Gita* II. 38)

"Taking as equal pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, gird thee for battle ; thus thou shalt not incur sin."

Not working in this spirit, one is liable to incur sin; for one who works under the impulse of attachment and ambition and simply with an eye to the fruit of his actions easily loses sight of righteousness and God. And the result is that, even though having a lofty ideal such as the welfare of the world at large or of his own country before him in the beginning, he falls an easy prey to lust, anger, hatred and malice, is deflected from his noble aim, and, falling into the meshes of a demoniac nature and following the ways of demons, paves the way to hell.

The Lord, while describing a demoniac nature, puts the following words into the mouths of those who are endowed with such nature:—"The world has no foundation and no truth behind it; there is no such thing as God; the world has sprung up as a result of sexual union (everything has come into existence of its own accord under natural laws). Taking their stand on such heretic views, these low-minded, foolish and outrageous persons make their appearance on this globe only to bring about its ruin. Their ambitions are insatiable. Possessed with hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, they cling to false beliefs out of ignorance, and, making unholy resolves and indulging in unholy practices, they move in the world placing vicious ideals before the public. There is no end to their schemes of sensual enjoyment, so much so that they depart from this world with those very schemes. That there is nothing else in this world beyond the gratification of desires, is their firm belief. They are held in bondage by numberless ties of expectations, are given over to lust and anger, and are busy accumulating objects of sense-enjoyment by fair and foul means merely for the gratification of their desires. They are always calculating as to what particular object has already been secured by them and what more they are going to acquire in the near future, how much wealth they already possess and how much more will accrue to them hereafter, what particular enemy has already been put out of the way and how many more have still to be got rid of, and so on. They have, moreover, exaggerated notions of their importance and hold themselves to be superior to all, enjoyers of all sorts of worldly enjoyments, perfect in all respects, powerful, happy, rich, well-born and matchless in every way. They are always indulging in schemes for the future of performing sacrifices, giving alms and rejoicing. Thus deluded and bewildered by numerous thoughts, enmeshed in the cobweb of infatuation and addicted to the gratification of desires, these foolish people fall headlong into the terrible hell-fire."

People of to-day, who are wedded to the so-called theory of action, will generally be found to answer the above description of 'Srīmad Bhagavadgītā'. People are arrogantly trying to banish God and religion, nay, even to obliterate them; whereas others are indulging in rank hypocrisy and seeking after sensual enjoyments in the name of God and

religion. Individuals as well communities and nations are pursuing an internecine policy of mutual destruction as was evidenced by the last great European War, which was marked by cupidity and malice on the part of the belligerent powers, and the preparations now going on for a repetition of the same.

Though inwardly engaged, in a hostile spirit, in augmenting their military resources and power, the different nations of the world are hypocritically striving to maintain a friendly attitude towards one another and playing the hoax of disarmament conferences, and so on. All of them are engaged in a self-aggrandising programme of crushing the weak and the down-trodden and snubbing those who are rising into prominence, and are foolishly trying to obliterate natural differences and creating artificial divisions where there is eternal and irrevokable unity. They are further endeavouring to abolish old institutions and create a new order of things and to usher in an era of unbridled licence. People do not hesitate in abusing and trying to humiliate those who differ from them, have no faith in the other world, destiny, God and morality and lead an arbitrary life, their sole object being to possess objects of sensual enjoyment. We cannot in all fairness question the 'bona fides' of these brethren of ours. Such a state of affairs is bound to ensue where people ignore God and work merely for earthly happiness and acquiring objects of sensual enjoyment. It should, therefore, be understood at the very outset that the 'Karmayoga' preached in the 'Gītā' is not the same as the modern theory of action, which is divorced from God and characterised by attachment and desire. It is something quite different. In the 'Gītā' Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa unequivocally says:—

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युद्धयस्व विगतज्वरः ॥

(III. 30)

"Surrendering all actions to Me, with thy mind fixed on Me, freed from hope and attachment and cured of mental fever, engage in battle."

Arjuna is here enjoined to engage in battle, but he is warned at the same time not to have any attachment with the kingdom nor to aspire for victory, nor again to allow his mind to feel the pinch of want. He is required to keep his mind fixed on the Lord and to engage in battle under His commands and at His instance in a selfless spirit. How can 'Karmayoga' of this above type be compared to the modern theory of action ?

Of course, just as the 'Gītā' does not ignore wisdom, even so it does not make us unworldly or discountenance the discharge of one's moral obligations such as the due performance of one's worldly and vocational duties, maintenance of one's family, service of one's parents, community, country, and of those who are afflicted, fighting for our birthrights and in the cause of our faith, protecting the weak, subjugating the oppressor, offering resistance to wrongs done to us, practising benevolent deeds, duly performing the duties attaching to one's caste and order, and so on. On the contrary, the 'Gītā' encourages us to perform our legitimate duties and calls upon Arjuna to lay down his life cheerfully at the altar of duty like a true Kṣatriya. The Lord enjoins him to fight like a hero for His sake, and with a knowledge of His true nature, having in view the immortality of the soul and keeping his mind balanced in success and failure, to meet his death like a hero on the field of battle or to emerge victorious therefrom, but not to allow attachment, ambition. envy, hatred, the feeling of mineness, hope, etc. to lurk in the mind. What an elevating and inspiring call to lay down one's life at the altar of duty ! This exposition even of the duties of a Kṣatriya is far superior to the modern theory of action.

The world consists of the three Guṇas which are constantly operating here. Whichever of these predominates at a particular moment, its function also partakes of its nature. It is an established fact that 'Prakṛti' or Nature has a downward tendency. Unless one ceaselessly strives to lift himself up he is bound to degenerate. If one does not endeavour

to rise above the 'Sattva-guṇa', i. e., to attain to the position of a Guṇātīta (one who has transcended the three Guṇas), the 'Sattva' in him is sure to degenerate in course of time into 'Rajas' and later on into 'Tamas.' In other words, 'Sattva' and 'Rajas' will fall into the background and 'Tamas' will have the upper hand. It should therefore be taken for granted that an action which is not directed towards God and has no dependence on God, and which has for its object the acquisition of worldly enjoyments only, even though characterised by a predominance of 'Sattva', gradually tends towards 'Rajas' and ultimately assumes the nature of 'Rajas.' Now, the question is, What are the distinctive marks of an increase of the 'Rajasic' element. The Lord says:—

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥

(*Gita* XIV. 12)

"With the increase of 'Rajas', O paragon of the decendants of Bharata, greed, activity, undertaking of different actions, restlessness of mind and desire make their appearance. "The Lord indicates in the following verse the nature of a doer of 'Rajasic' acts, possessing the above characteristics:—

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥

(*Gita* XVIII. 27)

"An agent who is attached to his actions as also to their fruit and desirous of obtaining their reward, is avarcious, bloody and impure, and is affected by joy and sorrow, is pronounced as belonging to the 'Rajasic' type."

The above characteristics are fully represented in the modern theory of action and in those who swear by it. Of course, such a life is far superior to a 'Tamasic' life of infatuation, inertia, sloth and vice; but this is in no way an ideal life. The quality of 'Rajas', if it does not tend towards 'Sattva', will begin to degenerate and ultimately be overwhelmed and thrown into the background by 'Tamas'. There was a stage in the evolution of Indian culture when sacrificial rites were abundantly performed with a view to enjoying sensual pleasures and acquiring material power and pelf in this life and noble birth in the next. Although the ritualism in vogue in our country in those days was far superior to the modern theory of action, which is godless in its very nature, it was accompanied by worldly desires and attachment and therefore degenerated into something 'Tamasic' in nature. The ignorance prevailing in India to-day and the 'Tamasic' and slothful life led by us at present is a natural consequence of this degeneration. It was for this reason that the Lord declared in the 'Gītā' that: "Those who cling to sensual enjoyments and mundane power cannot have a determinate Reason." A Karmayogī of the type mentioned in the 'Gītā' never clings to such enjoyments and power. He neither covets sensual pleasures nor is he averse to the righteous enjoyment of innocent pleasures without sufficient reason.

The Lord has described his way of enjoying sense-objects in the following memorable couplets:—

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥
प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥

(II. 64-65)

"One who has controlled his self and is free from likes and dislikes is never excited while enjoying the various sense-objects with his disciplined senses. That unruffled nature rids him of all afflictions, and the mind (Reason) of that self-complacent man is established (in God) in no time."

One who has mastered his mind and senses and is not a slave to them, and enjoys objects of an ennobling type according to the needs of the moment, without being attached to them, attains self-complacency. That is why the 'Karmayoga' preached in the 'Gītā' repeatedly inculcates the momentariness of pleasures derived from sense-gratification

and the evanescent nature of pleasure and pain and enjoins us to perform actions with a mind detached from worldly objects and senses duly controlled, and with a heart free from desire and attachment to the fruit of actions. The Lord says:—

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥
तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

(*Gita* II. 60 61)

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥

(*Gita* V. 22)

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥
युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥

(*Gita* V. 11-12)

"The agitating senses of even a wise man, though he be striving, forcibly carry away his mind. Therefore, having controlled them all and fixed one's mind on Me, one should devote himself heart and soul to Me. Whose senses are mastered, of whom the understanding is well-poised." "The pleasures born of contact (of objects with the senses) are verily a source of pain (even though appearing as enjoyable through ignorance). They have a beginning and an end and are not abiding in nature. It is for this reason that a sensible man does not indulge in them." "Hence those who follow the path of disinterested action and are devoid of the feeling of mineness work only with their body, mind and senses, without attachment, simply with a view to purifying their heart. And having fixed their mind on God and relinquishing the fruits of their actions, they attain to final peace in the shape of God-realization, whereas one who performs actions with a selfish motive and has confined his thoughts to worldly enjoyments only is tied down by desire through attachment to the fruit (of actions)."

One is unable to have an unwavering faith in God without purifying his heart; and unless one has acquired such a faith his actions cannot be purely God-inspired. A Karmayogi, therefore, works in the beginning with a view to cultivating a staunch faith in God; and once this is done, he acts only as an instrument worked by the Lord. He pays little attention at this stage to the outward form of an action and, caring not like Arjuna for the slaughter of elders or even his dear and near ones nor for cruel bloodshed, sees behind it the hand of God who constitutes his very goal, morality, object, life and religion. It becomes his second nature, as it were, to do His work attuning himself with Him. The climax of Gītā's teachings is reached in the following verse:—

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

This does not mean that one may do as he likes under the impulse of his sensual propensities, acting upon the promptings of his senses, and take it to be or call it the will of God. Those actions which suggest themselves to the mind engaged in constantly and devoutly thinking of God, nay, which gradually tend to curb our passions and desires and are prescribed by sciriptural ordinance, only such actions should in the beginning be taken as prompted by God. As we develop this practice, we shall gradually begin to have a clear perception of God's will. That is why the teachings of the 'Gītā' are really meant for a competent soul like Arjuna. But this competence also can be acquired by having recourse to the 'Gītā', studying and digesting it and moulding one's life according to its precepts. Hence it is that the teachings of the 'Gītā', though really meant for a competent soul who has his senses under control, leads an austere life and is devoted to God, are generally intended for all. It is incompetent souls who abuse the 'Gītā' and that is why it is vainly sought to establish and prove the modern theory of action with the help of the 'Gītā'.

While the 'Karmayoga' preached in the 'Gītā' is directed towards God, the

modern theory of action has for its object the enjoyment of wordly pleasures. This constitutes the main difference between the two. It is only because it is directed towards such an object that likes and dislikes, hatred, lust, anger, sin and affliction predominate in the latter of the two. And that is why those who swear by this theory of action wonder how can any action proceed without any desire, how can one engage in any work without having likes and dislikes. Unless one has desire for fruit he cannot put his heart into any work and will do it only perfunctorily. Activity born of the quality of motion ('Rajas') and directed towards the enjoyment of sensuous pleasures is characterised by attachment, desire, anger, likes and dislikes, hatred, etc. This has perverted our reason and makes us think like that. They, however, who have developed the quality of harmony ('Sattva'), whose reason has been directed towards God, are filled with vigour and zeal even in performing a most bloody action. Nay, a Karmayogī of the type mentioned in the 'Gītā' is immune from the fear of going astray, loss of effort and transgression, involved in actions preformed with attachment to their fruit or proceeding from likes and dislikes, due to the feeling of mineness, desire, diffidence, doubt, anxiety, restlessness, etc., and from disappointment caused by the actions not bearing the desired fruit. He surrenders both kinds of fruit, fabourable as well as unfavourable, at the feet of the Lord and executes the work of his Master or beloved Lord like an automaton with ever new vigour and joy and with untiring zeal; for the all-powerful Lord is constantly energising him. In fact, it is the Divine Energy which sets him to work: he never appropriates to himself the authorship of his doings. He never goes astray; for the Lord is always guiding him and giving him light. Constant remembrance of the Lord always keeps his heart illumined with the Divine effulgence. The attainment of a desired object or success in his work never turns his head nor deflects him from the path of duty; for there is no desire left in his mind to acquire anything new. He is a servant of the Lord, not one who seeks material gain in lieu of his devotion. His energy, knowledge, love and wisdom are always receiving fresh supplies from the energy, knowledge love and wisdom respectively of the Lord. Hence that Karmayogī is always engaged in working for the Lord with zeal and zest, personifying in himself unique efficiency, inexhaustible energy, uncommon vigour, a clear vision, unperturbed calmness, infinite joy and divine love. He works with a true knowledge of 'Karma' (duty), 'Akarma' (inaction) and 'Vikarma' (prohibited actions). That is why his actions are characterised by wisdom, devotion and equanimity, which can never be found in one who is swayed by attachment, desire, likes and dislikes, etc. and works with his senses and mind uncontrolled. An agent of the 'Sattvic' (best) type has thus been characterised by the Lord:—

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥

(*Gita* XVIII. 26

"An actor who is free from attachment and egoism, is endued with patience and vigour, and is unaffected by success or failure, he is called pure."

The 'Gītā' enjoins us to rise even beyond this 'Sattvic' nature; for even the quality of 'Sattva' (harmony) binds the 'Jīva' (although the tie of 'Sattva' serves to cut down the bonds of one who is always wide awake and striving). That is why the Lord calls upon Arjuna to transcend the three Guṇas (निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन). A Karmayogī of the type mentioned in the 'Gīta' continues to work, with a view to giving the right lead to the world, even after he has attained the position of a Guṇātīta (one who has transcended the three Guṇas). The Lord has fully explained this in Chapter III of the 'Gītā' by giving His own example, and enjoined us all to work ceaselessly in a selfless spirit for His sake, and, finally, declared that one could easily attain the highest state of immortality

through such selfless work. The actual words of the Lord are:—

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥
चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥

(*Gita* XVIII. 56, 57)

"A Karmayogi who has taken refuge in Me is able to attain the eternal state of immortality through My grace, though ever performing all actions. Therefore, surrendering all actions to Me mentally and with Myself as thy sole object, have thy mind constantly fixed on Me, resorting to the 'Yoga' of equanimity."

Those who earnestly seek to attain God by resorting to this 'Karmayoga' should therefore perform their legitimate duties attaching to them by birth-as enjoined by the Lord, thinking all the time of Him and Him alone. He has conveyed the following assurance to us:—

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युद्ध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥

(*Gita* VIII. 7)

"Therefore at all times do thou think of Me alone and fight (do thy duty). With thy mind and reason dedicated to Me thou shalt doubtless attain Me"

Such Yogīs, who are always thinking of the Lord in this way and work for His sake, have been called by Him as the best of all Yogīs:—

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥

(*Gita* VI. 47)

"And, among all Yogīs, he who, full of faith, with the inner Self abiding in Me, constantly thinks of Me, he is considered by Me to be the best of the lot."

What a world of difference exists between the 'Karmayoga' as preached in the 'Gītā' and the modern theory of action characterised by attachment and desire, should have become sufficiently clear from the above brief exposition.

On the Bhagavadgita.

By Dr. Else Lueders.

The 'Bhagavadgītā' is one of the richest and most beautiful blossoms on the many-branched tree of Indian literature. A splendid song that in numerous variations treats of the ever old and ever new theme: How can I attain knowledge that leads to salvation ? Should I become one with God through action, meditation or love ? Should I turn away from the temptations of the world, in order to achieve soul-peace, free from self-interest and selfishness ? We come across these thoughts again and again in ever new images in the wonderful poem. The 'Bhagavadgītā' is born of philosophy and religion; both these currents run in the 'Bhagavadgītā' side by side and into each other. It is this attitude of mind that strikes us Germans in India most and attracts us again and again. He who has visited India with a heart full of love for the Indian people and taken pains to dive deep into their inner life, does not fail to note that the Indian mentality has remained unchanged in the course of centuries and that even to-day the master-passion of the Hindu mind is to become one with God, to get merged in the 'Brahmānanda', through the realization of Truth.*

* Translated by Tarachand Roy.

The Way to Peace.

By Anilbaran Ray.

"He attains peace, into whom all desires enter as waters into the sea which is ever being filled, yet ever motionless—not he who is disturbed by every little inrush of desire."

(*Gita* II. 70)

The happy state which is attained by the practice of 'Yoga' is quite different from the ordinary life of man; one is night, while the other is day. The 'Gītā' makes this distinction clear with the help of a beautiful illustration. The ordinary man is like a small muddy pool; as a little inrush of water from outside is sufficient to disturb the little pool, and make it overflow, so the ordinary man is disturbed by any desire or sensuous temptation, and loses self-control. But the 'Yogī' is like the vast ocean (an ocean of wide being and consciousness); as waters enter into the sea, so all the desires of the world enter into him, but he himself has no desire. He is not disturbed by anything, but remains immovable, unperturbable like the ocean.

One becomes a slave to desires, who out of egoistic ignorance regards himself to be small and limited. He runs restlessly after all sorts of petty things. But he who has fixed his intelligence in the Self, always feels the infiinity of the self. He is complete and perfect in himself like the sea; the pull of petty desires cannot disturb him in the least. As the sea has kept itself open and spread out on all sides,—waters continually pour into it from the clouds, from the streams and rivers, but that does not affect the sea, does not increase or decrease it, the sea is ever where it is, is ever what it is, the consciousnes of the 'Yogī' is vast and spread out like that; touch, sound smell and other objects are continually entering into him through the senses, but nothing can disturb him, pollute him, deform him.

Desire is the craving for enjoyment produced by the senses when they are excited by external objects. The ordinary man cannot bear the velocity of this desire, but the 'Yogī' bears it remaining perfectly calm and immobile. As rivers and streams disappear after falling into the sea—no trace of them is left at all, so desires are completely lost as soon as they enter into the 'Yogī', they cannot produce any reaction or deformation in him. By using the phrase "all desires" (सर्वे कामा:)the 'Gītā' implies that one must not run away from any object of desire; as the sea remains immutable even after taking into it all the waters of the earth, so one must learn to bear and control the vehemence of the senses excited by objects of desire; only in this way one can become free from all disturbance of desire and attain the divine condition known as the Brahmic status (ब्राह्मी स्थिति).

"It is by ranging over the objects with the senses, but with senses subject to the Self, freed from liking and desliking, that one gets into a large and sweet clearness of soul and temperament in which passion and grief find no place." ('Gītā' II. 64). The moving force in the ordinary life of man is desire, liking and disliking (राग-द्वेष); the worldly life is going on by the operation of these forces. They have their use, they help men to rise above 'Tamas', inertia, which is the worst and lowest condition. Through the enjoyment of objects of sense, man develops his nature and grows towards a higher life. But the nature of this life of desire is restlessness and grief, (अनित्यमसुखं लोकम्). Only when one rises above this that one can attain to true peace; and that peace is not the deathlike peace of inert, inconscient matter, but that is full of light, power and joy, and the peace of that perfect status is the true goal of human life. In

order to attain that, one must at the very beginning root out all desire; for what is a help at a certain stage becomes a formidable obstacle at another. Desire helps us to rise above the Tamasic life of darkness and inertia, but it stands in the way of our attaining the higher divine life. Until desire is completely eliminated, no spiritual realization can be lasting; when desire is gone, one can be sure of all realizations. Therefore the 'Gītā' again and again insists that one must slay the arch-enemy desire and make the senses free from liking and disliking.

"But how is this desireless contact with objects, this unsensuous use of the senses possible? It is possible by the vision of the Supreme, the Soul, the 'Puruṣa' (परं दृष्ट्वा), and by living in the 'Yoga,' in union or oneness of the whole subjective being with that, through the 'Yoga' of intelligence. Then, free from reactions, the senses will be delivered from the affections of liking and disliking, escape the duality of positive and negative desire, and calm, peace, clearness, happy tranquillity (आत्मप्रसाद) will settle upon the man. That clear tranquillity is the source of the soul's felicity; all grief begins to lose its power of touching the tranquil soul; the inttelligence is rapidly established in the peace of the Self; suffering is destroyed" (Sri Aurobindo's 'Essays on the Gītā').

Gita: The Universal Mother.

By Mahatma Gandhi.

The following is the text of a Hindi speech that Gandhiji delivered at Benares to students:

NEVER FAILS HER DEVOTEE.

Early in my childhood I had felt the need of a scripture that would serve me as an unfailing guide through the trials and temptations of life. The Vedas could not supply that need, if only because to learn them would require fifteen to sixteen years of hard study at a place like Kashi, for which I was not ready then. But the Gītā, I had read somewhere, gave within the compass of its 700 verses the quintessence of all the Sāstras and the Upaniṣads. That decided me. I learnt Sanskrit to enable me to read the Gītā. To-day the Gītā is not only my Bible or my Koran; it is more than that—it is my mother. I lost my earthly mother who gave me birth long ago; but this eternal mother has completely filled her place by my side ever since. She has never changed, she has never failed me. When I am in difficulty or distress, I seek refuge in her bosom.

It is sometimes alleged against the Gītā that it is too difficult a work for the man in the street. The criticism, I venture to submit, is ill-founded. The Gītā enabled the late Lokamanya, out of his encyclopaedic learning and study, to produce a monumental commentary. For him it was a store-house of profound truths to exercise his intellect upon. But that need not scare away a lay reader. If you find all the eighteen chapters too difficult to negotiate, make a careful study of the first three chapters only. They will give you in a nutshell what is propounded in greater detail and from different angles in the remaining fifteen chapters.

Even these three chapters can be further epitomised in a few verses that can be selected from these chapters. Add to this the fact that at three distinct places the Gītā goes even further and exhorts us to leave alone all 'isms' and take refuge in the Lord alone, and it will be seen how baseless is the charge that the message of the Gītā is too subtle or complicated for lay minds to understand.

The Gītā is the universal mother. She turns away nobody. Her door is wide open to any one who knocks. A true votary of the Gītā does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in

perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding. But that peace and joy come not to the sceptic or to him who is proud of his intellect or learning. It is reserved only for the humble in spirit who brings to her worship a fullness of faith and an undivided singleness of mind. There never was a man who worshipped her in that spirit and went back disappointed.

EVER FRESH LESSONS.

Our students are prone to be upset by trifles. A trivial thing like failure in an examination plunges them into the darkest despair. The Gītā inculcates upon them the duty of perseverance in the face of seeming failure. It teaches us that we have a right to actions only but not to the fruit thereof, and that success and failure are one and the same thing at bottom. It calls upon us to dedicate ourselves, body, mind and soul, to pure duty, and not to become mental voluptuaries at the mercy of all chance desires and undisciplined impulses. As a 'Satyāgrahi,' I can declare that the Gītā is ever presenting me with fresh lessons. If somebody tells me that this is my delusion, my reply to him would be that I shall hug this delusion as my richest treasure.

A KAMADHENU.

I would advise the students to begin their day with an early morning recitation of the Gītā. I am a lover and devotee of Tulasidas. I adore the great spirit that gave to an aching world the all-healing 'mantra' of 'Rāma-nāma.' But I am here to-day, not to present Tulasidas to you, but to ask you to take up the study of the Gītā, not in a carping or critical spirit but in a devout and reverent spirit. Thus approached, she will grant your every wish. Once you have tasted of its sweet nectar, your attachment to it will grow from day to day. The recitation of the Gītā verses will support you in your trials and console you in your distress, even in the darkness of solitary confinement. And, if with these verses on your lips you receive the final summons and deliver up your spirit, you will attain 'Brahma-Nirvāṇa,' the Final Liberation. What that blessed state is—I leave it for your learned Achāryas to explain to you.

Immutability of Life.

Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burneth him, nor waters wet him, nor wind drieth him away.

Uncleavable he, incombustible he, and indeed neither to be wetted nor dried away; perpetual, all-pervasive, stable, immovable, ancient.

Unmanifest, unthinkable, immutable he is called; therefore knowing him as such, thou shouldst not grieve.

(*Gītā. II. 23-24-25.*)

The Call of the Gita.

By T. L. Vaswani.

The Gītā Jayanti Day is one of the greatest days in our history. On that day, according to tradition, Srī Kṛṣṇa gave on the Kurukṣetra the Great Message of the 'Gītā'. Srī Kṛṣṇa's Message, as I understand it, is a fourfold message. (1) There is the message He sang on the Flute,—the message of the 'Muralī'; (2) there is the message of the 'Gītā',—the message of his 'Vāṇī'; (3) there is, also, the message of his life,—a life of varied activity,—a life of singular grace and beauty, of singular strength and sacrifice. And (4) there is the message of Srī Kṛṣṇa as century after century He has influenced history,—the message of 'Kṛṣṇa-Sakti'.

To understand the message of Srī Kṛṣṇa it is necessary to answer the following four questions:—(1) What was the call of His Flute ? (2) What is the central teaching of the 'Bhagavadgītā' ? (3) What is the message of His Life ? and (4) What is the witness of 'Kṛṣṇa-Sakti' in history ?

I do not regard Srī Kṛṣṇa as one who came and departed, a figure of a dead past. I see Him through the spectacles of history as a living power.

It seems to me that we in this country are forgetting Srī Kṛṣṇa and His message. The youths of to-day pay homage to other gods. I was reading, the other day, a recent book named "The Story of Religion" by Potter. He writes this book after a study of 20 years. In this "Story" there are interesting chapters on Moses, Mohammed, Jesus, Zoroaster, Buddha, Guru Nanak Dev, Luther and other Reformers of the West,—Great Ones all ! But I was pained to see that the book is severely silent about Srī Kṛṣṇa. This sacred day let me impeach ourselves. Ours is the fault. We have not tried to send out Kṛṣṇa's Message abroad. Some time ago H. G. Wells, the famous author of "History of the World", prepared a list of the greatest ones. He gave 6 names, 3 from the East and 3 from the West. The six immortals of history he mentions are—Jesus, Buddha, Asoka, Aristotle, Bacon, Lincoln. And, on examining the list, I asked myself:—Where is Srī Rāma ? Where is Srī Kṛṣṇa ? Where is Guru Nanak Dev ? Ours is the fault. Upon us is the responsibility.

There is in Southern Germany a Christian preacher, Dr. Faulhaues, Archbishop of Munich. So popular is he that his church is filled to overcrowding to hear him. Not his church only. Three other churchas are connected with his church by means of radio loud-speakers to enable the vast assemblage of men and women to hear him. And only to-day I read that in a recent sermon he said of Buddha and Kṛṣṇa that "they lead to the message of distress." How untrue this ! Buddha's heart was full of love. And Srī Kṛṣṇa sang on the Flute a song of Joy. His message was one of immense optimism, of the supreme beauty and sanctity of life. On us, I repeat, is the responsibility to send abroad the message of Sri Kṛṣṇa. Therefore I ask every Indian to study the 'Gītā' and keep with him a copy of the 'Gītā'.

Many years ago, a great German scholar kindly came to see me at Karachi. His name is Prof. Rudolf Otto. We sat together discussing Hindu thought and culture. Time travelled fast. The evening hour came for divine service. I asked for leave to attend worship. "Let us meet again after worship," he said. And then he added: "You go to worship in your sanctuary; I shall worship here." How ? He took out from his pocket a small book, 'Goethe's Faust'. He said: "I carry it everywhere. I shall read from this book till you come back !" And I said to myself, "How many in India have for the 'Gītā' the love this German has for Goethe ?"

Srī Kṛṣṇa, as I said, is a 'Sakti' in history. His message has captured many

a Muslim heart. I think of Byli Khan, Muslim general in Chaitanya's days. He became a devotee of Srī Kṛṣṇa. I think of Taj, the Muslim Mīrā. I think of Krishna Das; he was a muslim by birth but became a devotee of Kṛṣṇa and changed his name and composed wonderful songs in praise of the Master.

Kṛṣṇa's philosophy of life is enshrined in the 'Gītā',—the world's greatest single philosophical poem. Some regard the 'Gītā' as a scripture of the 'Karma-Mārga,' some regard it as a scripture of the 'Bhakti-Mārga'; some again interpret it to be a scripture of the 'Jñāna-Mārga'. To me the 'Gītā' is a scripture of 'Sakti'. 'Karma', 'Bhakti' and 'Jñāna' belong to 'Sakti'.

One note of the Gītā's Gospel of 'Sakti' is sounded in the 'Mantra'—the 'Mahāmantra'—उत्तिष्ठ परंतप ! "Stand up ! O Arjuna !!" Not quietism but 'activism' is taught by the 'Gītā.' Work ! Work ! Work ! Work is a door to God-vision. The very opening word of the 'Gītā' is धर्मक्षेत्रे. Yes, life is a 'Kṣetra', a field of 'Dharma,'—a battle-field. The Call of the Flute is a call to the Battle-field ! Soldiers of the Spirit ! You must conquer 'yourselves'—your inner discord, your inner contradictions; you must conquer your 'environment', its conflict with the Ideal. Life would lose its vigour if it were a quest for pleasure. Life is conquest. To live is to fight,—for the Ideal. History is the battle-field of ideas. For which Idea will you fight ? Hedonistic or spiritual ? The hedonistic idea pursues pleasure. The spiritual is the vital. Serve the spiritual in your own sphere. The message of the 'Gītā' is a dynamic message,—a message of heroic spirituality. Abstraction from life is not 'Dharma'. Srī Kṛṣṇa showed profound insight into the deeper meaning and values of life when on the Kurukṣetra he said unto Arjuna:—"Stand up, O Parantapa !" India has suffered since the day she confounded the life spiritual with creeds of negation and inaction. Srī Kṛṣṇa taught a doctrine of conquest and creative life,—a doctrine of 'Sakti'. Life is a battle-field. And, on this battle-field, our 'Dharma' is to resist the forces of degeneration and stand on the side of the forces of Regeneration. Is work enough ? When I went to Europe, many years ago, I beheld tremendous activity. But what is the end of all this work ? See how they fight one another. The coming war will be a chemical war: scientists patronised by Governments sit in laboratories to discover more and more poisonous gases. Not this the Gītā's Gospel of Work. In another 'Mantra' the 'Gītā' says:—सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज । "Renounce thy cults and come to take refuge in Me !"

People are in anguish all over the world. Look how they fight in the names of cults and creeds. "Come unto Me !", says Srī Kṛṣṇa. Which I interpret to mean—"Come unto Love !" For Srī Kṛṣṇa was a very picture of Love ! Work—but charge it with Love ! In your actions, kindle the light of Love ! The "League of Nations" cannot do much ! The stronger nations sit to-day upon the weaker nations. A change of heart is needed. Not a "League" but a "Fellowship of Nations" is needed. The world's piteous need to-day is the Message of Love !

There is a pretty little story in the Purāṇas. One day, Srī Kṛṣṇa leaves Brindaban. The Gopīs ask:—"Whither is gone the Lord ! Whither ? Where has He disappeared ? And Rādhā looks for Him: he cometh not ! Then Rādhā calls a 'Sakhī' and says to her:—"Maybe Lord is gone to Mathura ! Look for Him there and tell Him Rādhā and other Gopīs wait for His coming ! When will He return ?" And the 'Sakhi,' sure enough, finds the Lord in Mathura, and to her the Master says:—"Take this message from me to Rādhā and the other Gopīs: I fain would return, but on this one conditon—kindle the light ! kindle the light in your homes !" And at this hour, when the world's chaos is deepening and civilizations are crumbling,—at this hour of the world's great agony, once again the Master's Message cometh:—"Behold ! I come quickly if ye will but kindle the light,—the Light of Love !"

What the Gita has meant to me.

By I. J. S. Taraporewala, B. A. Ph. D.

In my school days my father insisted that I should study Sanskrit for, he said, it would open out to me the treasures of the 'Gītā.' I bless his memory to-day and regard him as my true spiritual guide. My father used to call the 'Gītā' "The Bible of Humanity", and, as I grow in years and in experience of life, I find that this description is true.

The first thing that strikes one about the 'Gītā' is the extreme simplicity of its language. There are no complexities of rhetoric and diction, no jaw-breaking compounds, no out of the way forms of verbs. The verses flow smooth and easy and the words are also not difficult to understand. Such is the case also with all the Great Books of our human race. These have been given by the Great Messengers of God for the common people and in the language of the common people. The language is simple, the thought is profound. The thought is such that each time we go through one of these Books we get fresher, deeper interpretations. Such is the common characteristic of these Eternal Books—the 'Gītā', the 'Gospels', the 'Quoran', the 'Gāthās' of Zarathushtra and the other "Bibles" of our race.

To return to the 'Gītā'. In my school and college days my knowledge of the 'Gītā' was confined to scattered verses and to one or two chapters, particularly the 10th and the 15th, which were special favourites of my father. During my stay in Europe my study of the 'Gītā' became gradually deeper and more intimate. Once in Bombay I heard the 9th chapter being chanted very exquisitely by a Maratha lady. That melody has haunted me ever since and it was the beginning of my deeper acquaintance with the 'Gītā.' Since then the 'Gītā' has become a part of my philosophy of life and has coloured every activity. I believe that for me the 'Gītā' can never be exhausted, not merely in this life but even in lives to come.

As I grew older, the real value of the 'Gītā' began to be clearer to me. Having studied Sanskrit and understanding the simple language of the 'Gītā' with hardly any mental effort, I could now turn to the thought underlying. I found here an interpretation and a philosophy of life which has satisfied and has stood the test of all the varied experiences of my own life. I have been enabled to glimpse, however dimly, something of the Great Plan and every time I read a verse or a chapter I find in it something fresh, some profounder depth. The 'Gītā' is 'eternally fresh' as all truly inspired Scriptures always are. And, what is more, it is true and fresh for every human soul. It has a message for every individual irrespective of his mental or spiritual growth and outlook. Hence we see widely differing schools of philosophy quoting the 'Gītā' in support of their special views. To me the various commentaries on the 'Gītā' are proof of the universality of its Message and of its eternal freshness. I have my own commentary and interpretation not written down on paper—which I try to realize in my life. The important point is that this interpretation grows and varies and deepens as life gets fuller with experience.

The deepest solace the 'Gītā' brought me was when I began to study the Message of our particular racial Guru—Zarathushtra, the Sage of Iran. The first difficulty here was, of course, Avesta, the language of Ancient Iran. Here, too, Sanskrit was a help, for Sanskrit and Avesta were as close sisters as, say, Maithili and Bengali are to-day. Once the language difficulty was surmounted, I turned to the thought embodied in the Gāthās of Zarasthushtra.

Even the name 'Gāthā' signifies the same thing as 'Gītā': the words are from the same root. I cannot describe my joy when I discovered that the message of the scriptures which were my own by right of racial heritage was exactly the same as that of the 'Gītā' which had grown to be an integral part of my life. In fact, I found that I could quote a parellel to every verse of the 'Gāthās' from the 'Gītā.' Then I realized, as I had never done before, that the eternally fresh Message of God is identical, no matter in what language it is clothed. Unfortunately human beings have remembered the Messenger and have forgotten the Message. It is the Message that truly matters, the Messenger has His position because of His living the life He preaches. But we, with our narrow visions, call ourselves the followers of Kṛṣṇa or of Christ, of Zarathushtra or of Buddha, and we quarrel over their Names, forgetting the fact that all these Great Ones are Brothers in the deepest and truest sense of the term.

I learnt my first philosophy of life through the 'Gītā'. When I turned to my own scriptures, I found the same philosophy and the same freshness and profundity in them as well. Thus the 'Gītā' has given me the profound joy of knowing that the Message of Zarathushtra is the same that I had held sacred so long. it made me more fervent in my faith. Above all, I have realized that the Great White Brotherhood is a living reality. Nothing in life can give greater joy and security than this knowledge.

Classification of food, sacrifice, etc. according to the different Gunas.

Object classified	Sattvic.	Rajasic.	Tamasic.
Worship	Worship of gods. (XVII. 4)	Worship of Yakṣas (a species of demi-gods) and Rākṣasas (Demons). (XVII. 4)	Worship of ghosts and other evil spirits. (XVII. 4)
Food	Articles which promote longevity, intelligence, vitality, health, happiness and joy, and are palatable, bland substantial and agreeable, such as wheat, rice, green beans, dairy products, fruits and vegetables, etc. (XVII.8)	Articles which are exceedingly bitter, sour, saline, overhot, pungent or dry, cause a burning sensation and give rise to pain, grief and malady, such as opium, tamarind,, chillies, parched grain, rye, etc. (XVII. 9)	Food which is half-cooked, flat putrid, stale, polluted and unholy, such as meat, onions, pickles, spirituous liquor and the remains of food eaten by others. (XVII. 10)
Sacrifice	That which is performed in accordance with the injunctions of the Sāstras and simply by way of duty and has no selfish motive behind it. (XVII. 11)	That which, though conforming to the scriptural ordirnance, is performed with a desire for its fruit or simply for show. (XVII. 12)	That which does not proceed on the lines laid down in the Sāstras, is not accompanied by doles of food, has nothing to do with Mantras (scared formulas), does not bestow gifts (on the officiating priests) and is devoid of faith. (XVII. 13)

Object classified	Sattvic.	Rajasic.	Tamasic.
Austerity	Three* types of austerity practised with faith and in a disinterested spirit. (XVII. 17)	Three* types of austerity which are practised with a view to receiving respect, honour and homage and for mere show, and whose fruit is therefore uncertain and transitory. (XVII. 18)	Three* types of austerity which are practised under a foolish misapprehension by torturing one's body, mind and vocal organs (lungs) and with a view to harming others. (XVII. 19)
Gift	Bestowing on one that which he really and legitimately requires, at the right moment, by way of duty and without expecting anything in return from him. (XVII. 20)	A gift which is made in the hope of receiving something in return or with a view to some worldly or other-worldly gain (such as renown, honour, distinction, applause, progress in business, heavenly bliss, etc.) and with a grudging heart. (XVII. 21)	A gift which is made in an arbitrary way, irrespective of whether the donor really and legitimately requires it at that time, or disrespectfully and with contempt. (XVII. 22)
Renunciation (त्याग)	Performing actions of an obligatory nature (those prescribed by the Sāstras) with a sense of duty and relinquishing attachment thereto as well as the desire for their fruit. (XVIII. 9).	Relinquishing actions bodily, as something full of botheration, from fear of physical suffering. (XVIII. 8)	Relinquishing actions of an obligatory nature under some delusion. (XVIII. 7)
Knowledge	Viewing the one indestructible Divine principle, which appears as existing separately in several individuals, as subsisting equally in all as an undivided whole. (XVIII. 20)	Viewing the manifold several existences in all beings as separate. (XVIII. 21)	The knowledge which leads one to mistake the body for the Self, which is divorced from reason, which does not embrace the reality and which is trivial and narrow. (XVIII. 22)

* Austerity is either bodily, mental or vocal.

Austerity of the body:-Service of gods, Brahmans (the priestly class), elders and the wise, cleanliness, humility, continence, and harmlessness--these, broadly speaking, constitute bodily penance. (XVII. 14)

Austerity of speech:-Speaking words which cause no annoyance to others, and which are agreeable, well-meaning and truthful at the same time. At other times, when there is no occasion for addressing such words to others, one should study sacred works composed or compiled by sages and seers, and recite the holy names of God and sing praises to Him. These are the main items of vocal austerity. (XVII. 15)

Austerity of the mind:-Keeping the mind cheerful and composed, not to indulge in vain speculation and idle thoughts, *i. e.*, thoughts other than those relating to God, keeping the mind well controlled and unsullied. These are the principal factors constituting austerity of the mind. (XVII. 16)

Object classified	Sattvic.	Rajasic.	Tamasic.
Action	Actions of an obligatory nature which are performed without attachment or repulsion by one who does not recognize himself to be their doer and is undesirous of their fruit. (XVIII. 23).	Actions, involving great exertion, which are done by one who is desirous of their fruit and recognizes himself to be the doer. (XVIII. 24)	Actions which are done foolishly and impulsively without regard to their consequences, the harm accruing from them, the injury to life involved therein and one's own capacity. (XVIII. 25)
Doer	He who performs his legitimate duties with confidence and zeal and without attachment or egoism, and who is not elated in success nor depressed in failure. (XVIII.26)	He whose actions are prompted by greed and characterised by attachment and are unholy and involving injury to others, and who is drowned in joy and sorrow in success and failure respectively. (XVIII. 27)	He who is fickle-minded, stupid, haughty, cunning, depressed in spirits, lazy, and of dilatory habits, and deprives others of their means of subsistence. (XVIII. 28)
Reason (बुद्धि)	That which rightly discriminates between the paths of action and renunciation, what ought to be done, and what ought not to be done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation. (XVIII.30)	That which is incapable of ascertaining what is right and what is wrong, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. (XVIII. 31)	That which mistakes the wrong course for the right one and arrives at wrong conclusions in every matter. (XVIII. 32)
Firmness (धृति)	That which clings to God to the exclusion of all other objects and directs all the activities of the mind, senses and the vital airs towards God through Yoga in the shape of nearness to God. (XVIII. 33)	That which leads one desirous of fruit to pursue righteousness, wealth and gratification of desires with attachment. (XVIII. 34)	Through which an evil-minded person gives himself up entirely to sleep, fear, grief, sorrow and wantonnness.(XVIII. 35)
Pleasure	That which one enjoys by practice of noble actions such as remembrance of God, meditation, service, etc.; which eventually destroys pain, which though loathed in the beginnning like poison (as a truant boy loathes his school) makes one immortal in the end and enables him to attain salvation. (XVIII. 36-37)	That which, on the senses coming into contact with their respective objects, appears enjoyable as nectar in the beginning (i. e., at the time of enjoyment, like the pleasure one derives by rubbing the parts affected by ringworm) but is bitter like poison in its consequences, bringing ruin as it does here as well as hereafter. (XVIII. 38)	That which infatutes the Self in the beginning as well as in the end, and is derived from sleep, indolence and idle pursuits. (XVIII. 39)

The Characteristics of a Bhakta according to Gita.

(Chapter XII, Verses 13 to 20.)

1. A devotee bears ill-will to none.
2. He is friendly to all.
3. He takes compassion on afflicted beings without distinction.
4. He claims nothing as his own except God.
5. He is free from egoism.
6. He views pleasure and pain equally as aspects of the same God.
7. He wishes well even of those who harm him.
8. He is ever content, whether he meets with gain or loss, success or failure.
9. He has his mind constantly fixed on God.
10. He has his mind and senses under control.
11. He has an unwavering faith in God.
12. He has his mind and reason dedicated to God.
13. He never offends any one.
14. He never takes offence.
15. He does not rejoice in the acquisition of worldly objects.
16. He does not envy others' advancement.
17. He is always fearless.
18. He is never perturbed under any circumstance.
19. He does not covet anything.
20. He is always clean both internally and externally.
21. He is an adept in the art of devotion as well as in eliminating faults.
22. He is always impartial.
23. He is free from worries and afflictions.
24. He believes that every undertaking is inspired by Divine Energy.
25. He is never delighted at the influx of sense-enjoyments.
26. He does not grudge the impending loss of worldly objects.
27. He does not mourn their destruction either.
28. He does not seek to regain worldly objects once lost or unacquired.
29. He does not desire the fruit of good or evil deeds.
30. He is alike to friend and foe.
31. He takes honour and ignominy at the same value.
32. He is balanced in heat and cold.
33. Pleasure and pain make no difference to him.
34. He has attachment for nothing whatsoever.
35. He takes praise and reproach, victory and defeat equally.
36. He never talks of anything else than God.
37. Being merged in love of God, he remains cheerful in every circumstance.
38. He does not claim the ownership of house and other property.
39. He keeps his mind and reason steady in God.
40. He always quaffs of the life-giving nectar of Divine Love.
41. He has a firm resolve.
42. He has God and God alone as his highest goal.

[The above virtues are naturally present in accomplished (सिद्ध) devotees and should be followed as an ideal by practising (साधक) devotees.]

My Duty.

By Devaki Nandan Sharma, M. A., LL. B.

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

Who is to determine the 'Dharma' of a person? Does it imply the social tyranny as was exhibited in the killing of Śambūka by Śrī Rāma, much against his will, or the banishment of Sītā, the unrivalled embodiment of chastity, or the condemnation of Galileo, the great Italian astronomer, or even in the crucifixion of Jesus, the Lord of Love?

It may be interesting to note in passing what Mr. F. H. Bradley calls 'My Station and its Duties'. In fact, men do not drop from heaven. Every person is born with certain proclivities, powers and opportunities at a particular time and place. He unconsciously imbibes the Ethos of his people and generally grows into what his environments determine him to be. He generally finds his sphere of activity already more or less determined for him. Thus he finds himself fixed in a particular station with its appropriate duties. It is this station with the duties pertaining thereto which is what the 'Dharma' means.

But why is स्वधर्मो विगुणः (unattractive duty) much better than परधर्म (another's duty)? The text means that wherever one's lot is cast one has to accept it without grumbling. The reason is that if people begin to ignore their work, which is theirs by habit or choice, and vie with one another in avoiding the irksome, the social organisation will stop functioning. Imagine the consequences if even the tiniest part of the machinery of a watch stops doing its work. In society also what we regard as a mean work is most vital for the proper functioning of the society. It is therefore that a विगुणो धर्मः is to be preferred to another's in the higher interests of the Society.

But why should परधर्मः (another's duty) be भयावहः (fearful)? Because, if it is not so, one's energy will be frittered away in several directions. In order, therefore, to be able to apply his undivided attention to his own job, he must regard others' job with a suspicious eye. One's only concern is to merge oneself entirely in one's work. His prime duty is to do that work well. Let his work not become his task, but be his labour of love, his very joy. Let his work, to become सत्यम् (true), express truly his self, his entire and real self. And, when the work is done with the motive of promoting the universal good—सर्वभूतहिते रताः, it will certainly be शिवम् (designed to achieve the common weal). Then it will present a sight for gods to see—सुन्दरम् (beautiful).

Was it not Socrates, the wisest man of his age, who excelled all others in sticking to the post of his duty in the midst of a terrible war? Did not the highest 'Yogī' of his times, King Janaka, toil hard in administering to the needs of his famishing subjects?

This rule does not admit of any exception. Whatever duties pertain to the station which one happens to occupy will have to be performed, however highly placed he may be in the spiritual

grade. Even the स्थितप्रज्ञ, who has virtually nothing left to be done, has to keep on doing the duties of his station, even though he may have nothing to gain thereby. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: "Although I do not need doing anything for Myself, yet I do the duties that pertain to the office of My choice." There is only one supreme consideration with which such duties have to be performed. It is that there should be no personal attachment with the action, resulting in pleasure if the performance is successful and pain if it is a failure. तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर (Do thy duty constantly without any sense of attachment). Does not Plato, the eminent Greek philosopher, preach the same truth in his famous book THE REPUBLIC, when he wants the philosophers to leave their caves, where they are lost in contemplating the beauty of the good, come back and share the worries of their less fortunate brethren. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the author of the 'Gītā', played the humble role of a charioteer and played it well, flinging aside all the chances of personal prowess and distinction, and not swerving from the path of his choice even once.

Resemblances between Gospel and Gita.

By Ernest P. Horrwitz, New York.

In the beginning was the Word, the only-begotten of the Father (*St. John,* I. 14). Creation is a divine expression, the utterance or word of God. In the beginning was *Brahma*, the first-begotten (*Prathamaja*), the golden germ of the Father, according to the 'Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.' *Brahma* signifies thought bursting into expression, also prayer breaking forth from the inmost soul.

The Word was made flesh; divine thought flashed forth and dwelt among us. The 'Chhāndogya Upaniṣad' affirms that created life travails with sound and shape; but the infinite display of 'Nāma-Rūpa', name and form, is really 'Brahma.' What they are internally, that is 'Brahma', that is immortal ! (यदन्तरा तद् ब्रह्म, तदमृतम्). 'Form' includes the tangible creation. 'Name' embraces all ideas of the creative mind, the whole mental empire. Poetry and philosophy are name; physical science deals with form. Pindar and Plato were nominalists; Newton and Darwin formalists.

Gospel and 'Gītā' apparently contradict, but really supplement one another. The Gospels admonish: love your neighbour as yourself ! The 'Gītā' counsels: recognize yourself in your nieghbour ! From the New Testament we know that the heart of man is naturally corrupt; Christ alone can make it whole. And the 'Gītā' adds that unaided reason is a deceptive light; self-realization alone can rectify the original error and atone for hereditary sin.

The only way to reach the Father is through the Son. Self-will has to be renounced. Regeneration of the will is the mystic birth of the Christ in us. The first man, self-will, is of earth, earthy; the second, resigned will, is the Lord from heaven. Unregenerate man, the old Adam, lives the natural life of the five senses; but risen man is world-detached and God-centred. Christian believers;

by virtue of their faith, are one in Christ, partakers of his sonship and eternal life. And the 'Gītā' promises that all who know themselves to be 'Brahma', by virtue of that knowledge, become 'Brahma'.

Gospel and 'Gītā' often differ in the letter, but agree in spirit. The one dispenses with the Mosaic law, and the other with Vedic rites, on the ground that holy sacrifice and even a blameless life are insufficient to redeem the soul from perdition. A moral code without a spiritual basis is ineffectual. Even the loftiest ethics, if divorced from religion, are empty soap-bubbles, unreal like a castle in the clouds. A far deeper chord than synagogue or ethical society can touch rings in the Apostle's saying that no good dwells in the flesh, and that God alone works in the heart His eternal will and pleasure. Of mine own I can do nought for my salvation except sanctify my will. What I need is Grace, my natural self being disgraced, and out of tune with the divine plan and law. I am foul by nature, conceived in sin:—

Born with a personal debt which I must pay;
All scores are chalked against the reckoning day.

Christian Vedantists, in their eagerness to reconcile Gospel and 'Gītā', reason that our sufferings in the flesh, as far as they are not results of youthful folly, originate from prenatal shortcomings. That is their interpretation of original sin. Christian Platonists held a theory, wilder still: mutual attraction between two incarnate souls manifests as sex love; so does affinity between an unborn soul and earthly parents who vibrate in harmony with that soul. At the time of rebirth, imperfect souls feel drawn to a father of congenial character, and to a mother mentally attuned. Like disposition draws like. Neo-Platonism explains hereditary transmission as elective affinity. The notion of transmigration is not absent from the Gospels. The question put to Jesus by his disciples (*St. john*, IX. 2) indicates that belief in pre-existence was not uncommon among them. Mortality moves between cradle and coffin, but eternal soul is neither subject to birth nor death. Soul "is", and always has been, and always shall be, world without end.

Earth-life is a penalty inflicted, a cross to be borne, a fallen state which calls for redemption. The object of the Christian life is not riches nor being held in good report; but blessed are they that choose poverty and mourning, and who shall be reviled and persecuted because they dare be true to their highest aspirations, and want to live the Christ-life.

If I find him, if I follow,
What his guerdon here ?
Many a labour, many a sorrow,
Many a tear !

We are begotten in sin, the Gospels affirm; we are born in nature's magic and in cosmic illusion, the 'Gītā' maintains. The senses cheat and delude us into the belief that appearances are real. As long as we rely on the untrusty evidence, we are in the dark; entrapped by magic ('Māyā'). Distrust in sense-impressions, faith in a reality beyond the world of sense is the first awakening ('Prabodha') from the perturbed dreams of natural life. Doubt in the things we see, and faith in the unseen are the incipient birth-pangs and forebodings of the new life, the changed life in the spirit. Prince Kṛṣṇa reveals this truth; the 'Gītā' extols Him as a God-man. His divinity is unbegotten, incorruptible, indestructi-

ble. His human personality, embodied for the benefit of mankind, is ready for future incarnations, whenever a healer and benefactor be needed in this world of error and backsliding. Such is the Hindu belief. Christ also ideally existed, since the beginning of time, hidden in the bosom of the Father. "Before Abraham was I am" (Fourth Gospel). "I am before the gods were", exclaims uncreated 'Ātmā' (Spirit) in the 'Taittirīya Upaniṣad'. "I am the first-begotten in the cosmic order", proclaims incarnate 'Ātmā' in the preceding sentence. 'Ātmā' is our spiritual nature, and at the same time the Holy Spirit, inspiring and uplifting; the sanctifying touch of God. Nature and spirit, human will and divine grace, mortality and immortality, exclude one another. Hence every God-sent teacher appears to be brimful of contradictions. Has he not to persuade natural men and women that they are spiritual, to convince slaves that they are free, and mortals that they are immortal ?

Wilhelm von Humboldt and the Bhagavadgita.

By Heinrich Lueders, Berlin University.

On the 30th of June 1825 and 15th of June 1826 Wilhelm von Humboldt read out his "Essay on the 'Bhagavadgītā', an Episode of Mahābhārata" in the Berlin Academy of sciences. Humboldt, equally great as a scholar and a statesman, had studied the poem in the original language in the edition published by August Wilhelm Von Schlegel and it had made a powerful impression on his mind. He wrote in a letter to a friend of his: "The 'Bhagavadgītā' is the deepest and suplimest production that the world possesses. I read it with a permanent feeling of gratitude towards Fate that has let me live (kept me alive) in order to study this work (lit. make the acquaintance of this work)." In the course of more than a century that has passed since, we have come to know a lot more about Indian literature and Indian philosophy; therefore it is obvious that some of Humboldt's views are already antiquated. But the ingenious observations that Humboldt has made on the peculiar nature of philosophic poetry towards the end of his essay on the "Bhagavadgītā" deserve attention even now. Humboldt is of opinion that the "Bhagavadgitā" comes nearer to the true idea of philosophic poetry than any other work of a similar kind which has reached our times, and that it is entirely distinct from the "so-called" philosophical or didactic poems. According to Humboldt, the organic union of poetry and philosophy is the distinctive characteristic of a true philosophic poem, while only an apparent or mechanical combination of poetry and philosophy, as it were, is to be met with in poems that are not of a truly philosophic character. The organic union takes place there alone where the philosophic ideas are born of inner ecstasy. The fire of poetry must needs be there to elicit the truth from the deeps of the mind. The philosophic doctrine should not seek for the poetic garb as a borrowed adornment; it must blossom forth into expression because of an inner impulse. This can only be the case when the philosophic

Sanjaya reproducing the message of Gita to Dhritarashtra by clairvoyance.

ideas go back to the point where the analytical intellect ceases to trace effects back to causes and where the truth flares up intuitively from the heights of pure self-consciousness. Philosophic poetry in the true sense of the term must rise above the mere concatenation of natural phenomena and a stringing together of causes and effects. Humboldt finds this ideal realized in the *Bhagavadgītā* in which the contact of the finite and the Infinite is the main question. The distinction of these two is an eternal and incontestable truth. On the other hand, it is worth noting that Humboldt denies the title of a philosophic poem in this highest sense of the term to the famous poem "On the Nature of Things" of Lucrece. A philosophy that makes it a point to explain everything by natural laws and denies the need and possibility of going beyond nature, cannot come to a really inner union with poetry. It can at the most put on the poetic form as an external garment.

Humboldt discusses at last the question also whether the permeation of poetry and philosophy is possible in our age and comes to the conclusion that the German poet Schiller has succeeded in doing so in his best works in the treatment of such subjects as cannot be exhausted by "ideas" but can be described in a graphic way by means of the poetic fancy.

Thus, the *Bhagavadgītā* has been a source of great inspiration to one of the most distinguished men of Germany. His judgment has been re-echoed far and wide, and it is above all due to Humboldt that in Germany to-day the *Bhagavadgītā*, as the numerous translations prove it, is one of the most widely read books of the world literature.

Immortality of the Soul.

He who regardeth this (the dweller in the body) as a slayer, and he who thinketh he is slain, both of them are ignorant. He slayeth not, nor is he slain.

He is not born, nor doth he die; nor having been, ceaseth he any more to be; unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient, he is not slain when the body is slaughtered.

Who knoweth him indestructible, perpetual, unborn, undiminishing, how can that man slay, O Pārtha, or cause to be slain?

(*Gītā II. 19-20-21*)

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* Translated from the German by Tarachand Roy.

A Method of studying the Gita.

By P.N. Sankara Narayana Iyer, B.A, B.L.

In Sri Gauranga's life is given an instance of how a great devotee once discoursed on the Gītā by his conduct. It is said that during Sri Gauranga's southern tour he saw at Srirangam a man daily reading the Gītā and shedding tears of joy, filled with 'Pulaka'. The sight of the man, so steeped in the Gītā joy, kindled up love of Kṛṣṇa in the beholders. Sri Gauranga asked him to explain how he enjoyed the Gītā. He replied, "I do not understand a word, but the feeling that the very words which Srī Kṛṣṇa uttered to Arjuna are again passing through my lips sends thrills of joy and bliss into me and I see before me Srī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna." That seems to be the only way to discourse on the Gītā: to dive into its realization and let the inner joy that is roused speak for itself. Conscious discourse on its philosophic interpretation may be left to those to whom such a mission is given by Him, or to the learned. The Gopīs, too, enjoyed the sweetness of the sounds and lips when Kṛṣṇa spoke, leaving it to the learned to discourse on its philosophy. And, when he sang on another occasion, not merely to man but to all nature, all nature—animate and inanimate—got steeped in the joy of the song; but the learned, who tried to analyse its philosophy, only got confused:—

सवनशस्तदुपधार्य सुरेशाः शक्रशर्वपरमेष्ठिपुरोगाः ।
कवय आनतकन्धरचित्ताः कश्मलं ययुरनिश्चिततत्त्वाः ॥

(Srimad Bhagavata)

Taking hold, therefore, of the Bhāva or earnest thirst that may be roused in one, one has to dive into 'Sādhana'; the results of the realization, be they ever so little, by the 'Sādhana' from stage to stage, in the various detailed experiences of each struggling 'Jīva', seem to be the really valuable commentary on the Gītā, which will help another struggler. To interpret merely by the intellect or study seems valueless and arrogant. The Gītā is essentially practical and mystic in its teaching. It is, from end to end, brief, terse, authoritative, unaccompanied by illustrative stories, etc. as is 'Srīmad Bhāgavata'. Srī Suka had seven days to deliver his message and give life. But Sri Kṛṣṇa had perhaps only a few minutes, and the scene was dreadfully intense with stirring excitement, as is the momentary dreary stillness that precedes the storm. He could not discourse long, or induce or illustrate. He had to speak tersely with dread earnestness. Perhaps, therefore, much of the message was given in signs, looks, or in other ways than by mere words. It was a message which had, too, to rouse Arjuna to immediate and intense action. That is why perhaps, in spite of apparent ease of style, the Gītā is perhaps the hardest work to understand. To launch therefore into disquisitions which are neither on the one hand the direct outflow of some truth realized in the heart by 'Sādhana' and vision nor, on the other, expected to induce immediate action on the part of the reader: to launch into such disquisitions seems to be arrogance to the Gītā. Intensely mystic, and dominated as it is by the immediate presence and personality of Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself, one can interpret the Gītā only when Kṛṣṇa Himself speaks in the heart.

So, I shall just state humbly a few experiences of mine, conceiving of myself as a struggling 'Jiva' and my experiences as all men's property. The method of the devotee, as mentioned by Sri Gauranga, has been the one that mostly appealed to me for studying the Gītā. I studied it but could not make out much. So, I re-

solved that I should get more attuned to Kṛṣṇa for Him to speak to me His meaning. 'Srīmad Bhāgavata', which seems to me the most impassioned exposition of the Gītā, helped to some extent to rouse in my mind a thirst and a pining to reach Kṛṣṇa and to become His dear one and to have Him as my dear one. It enabled me to cry to Him and to shed tears for Him. Verses from 'Srīmad Bhāgavata' automati cally rose in my mind in sonorous cadence according to the need of the moment and seemed to guide me at every step, like a never-failing friend. To give an instance of how the Gītā and the Bhāgavata led me on, the verse in the 'Gītā' which first appealed to me and moulded my conduct was:—

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥

(*Gita* III. 10)

'The Lord created His children along with the spirit of dedication and service and said to the children, "By this spirit of sacrifice proper and grow; may this give you all you seek."' And Kṛṣṇa's advice to the Gopas just before he was going to test the Brahmans who were performing 'Yajña', seemed to me a commentary by Himself on this verse as to the meaning of 'Yajña' and the method of prospering by it. Pointing to the lofty trees on the banks of the Jamuna, He said:

पश्यतैतान् महाभागान् परार्थैकान्तजीविनः ।
वातवर्षातपहिमान् सहन्तो वारयन्ति नः ॥
एतावज्जन्मसाफल्यं देहिनामिह देहिषु ।
प्राणैरर्थैर्धिया वाचा श्रेय एवाचरेत् सदा ॥

"Look at these blessed beings whose life's one purpose is serviceability to others. They bear the fury of the wind, the sunshine and the snow, and shield us. This is the fulfilment of life: that all embodied beings should, for the prosperity of other embodied beings, offer up ceaselessly their life-energy, their possessions, their intelligence and their speech." This advice made me first to share my attainments, whatever they were, with those near me—my wife and sisters. At first it was very difficult, but I did not give in; I prayed and persisted. Grace came and my wife turned. Then my sisters, who were away, joined my work. These drew more women and girls into the Bhāgavatic view of life. My first efforts of 'Yajña' bore a rich crop. At first my aim was to provide sustenance for my wife and child and get liberated soon into 'Sannyāsa'. But the effort of treating the home-mates as free souls and sharing with them freely what I got in my search for truth, soon made all of them my companions in the struggle for a life of upward effort and service. No more need there was of seeking liberation in 'Saṃnyāsa'. All were eager to work and evolve and to serve. Thus in my limited experience I found 'Yāga' being my इष्टकामधुक्. So we pine for more and more opportunity to serve and He gives it when and as we deserve.

To go on with my general narration, the Gītā and the 'Bhāgavata' soon roused in me a thirst for 'Satsanga' and 'Sādhusevā' and taught me and led my steps, in spite of myself, to a great man. I spoke to him of 'Srīmad Bhāgavata'. He spoke to me of Kṛṣṇa. He led me on the path. Then a desire came into me to read the प्रस्थानत्रय, which he was expounding to many. But he said that since I have, by the grace of the Holy Ones, got a hold already on Kṛṣṇa and 'Srīmad Bhāgavata', and as His Holiness the Swami of Sringeri, the embodied Sankara Himself, had appeared to me once in a dream during my pinings and cryings and had given 'Srīmad Bhāgavata' into my hands, and said, "This will take you on to Kṛṣṇa," it would be well and sufficient for me to keep to his advice. Yet, he said, if I was particularly eager, he would give me the 'Adyanta Sānti' of the 'Gītā Bhāṣya' alone at some auspicious hour and then the needed light from the 'Gītā' would, when necessary, dawn in my heart. So he did 'Adyanta Sānti' on an auspicious hour. Since then, a desire to study the 'Gītā' sometimes comes into me: particular verses stick to my mind and revolve again and again in my heart. The devotional

verses of 'Srīmad Bhāgavata' alone ring ever in my mind. But of the Gītā, not the verses extolling or urging devotion but those relating to 'Sthitaprajña', now vibrate again and again in my mind. I do not know why it is so; but I do not stop to question it. I feel that Kṛṣṇa is leading me and speaking to me, and I do not choose to question what He gives. I feel time will explain all. Some day I hope to sense the bliss of the Gītā when, as Arjuna had, I have Him by me and when He supplements the words, as He did to Arjuna, by gesture, look, love, presence, and, above all, by His will to give light. Then will He, I trust, enable me to discourse by action and conduct, as Sri Gauranga did, and to have the joy of serving Him so.

Virtues constituting a divine nature.

(Verses 1 to 3 of Chap. XVI of the Gita.)

1. Those possessing divine properties are always fearless.
2. Their hearts are thoroughly clean.
3. They are constantly united with a knowledge of the Divine Reality.
4. They give alms to the deserving at a suitable place and time.
5. They practise self-control.
6. They perform sacrifices of various kinds according to their station in life.
7. They study scriptures of a divine origin and those attributed to ancient sages and seers and recite the sacred names of God and tales of His glory.
8. They suffer hardships in order to be able to lead a righteous life.
9. They try to follow the path of rectitude with their mind, body and senses.
10. They abstain from violence of all kinds, physical, mental, or vocal.
11. They always represent things as they have known or understood them, in agreeable language.
12. They are never angry even with those who harm them.
13. They mentally disclaim the authorship of actions seemingly done by them.
14. Their minds are completely at rest.
15. They never speak ill of others.
16. They have natural compassion for all.
17. They do not feel attracted towards sense-objects even when their senses get united with them.
18. They are mild in speech and tender of heart.
19. They feel abashed in doing anything contrary to the wishes of God, feeling His presence everywhere.
20. They never indulge in idle thoughts, idle talk or idle movements.
21. They acquire a sort of majesty and lustre.
22. They seek the forgiveness of God for the sins of even those who do them great harm.
23. They never lose patience.
24. They are always clean in body as well as in thought.
25. They bear no ill-will against any one.
26. They never hold themselves superior to any one.

(Liberation or God-realization is the reward for these virtues.)

Why is the Gita so popular ?

By Otto Strauss, Breslau University.

It will be difficult to name a second Indian book which is so widely known inside and outside India, so universally loved in all Hindustan as the "Song of the Holy One." What is the reason for this unique fact ? There are better poems in Sanskrit as regards poetry, more radiant with the beauties of 'Alaṃkāra-Śastra', of a sweeter melody and a more varied rhythm, and the same may be said for the Gītā's other topics. There are so many religious books which give fuller views of the God adored, so many philosophical discourses about Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Vedānta, which give better information as regards systematical teaching and full particulars. And who would deny that everything a Kṣatriya needs to know about his 'Dharma' can be learned from other sources as well, nay much better ?

But these questions seem perplexing at first sight only, for in putting them we have approached the solution already. All these books I hinted at as giving more and fuller details on the topics of the *Gītā* can do it only by their one-sidedness, whereas the *Gītā* by its many-sidedness covers not only a very extensive field in its two verses but also unites ideas which for the specialist are contradictory. This conciliatory tendency, may it come from intellectual device or from a natural propensity, seems to me so very Indian. This tendency can be found also in the 'Vedānta Sutras', which at a later date tried to unite differring schools of Vedānta, fighting each other and so endangering Indian unity, in front of very clever attacks from the Buddhist camp. This I think is at least one reason for the vagueness of expression which Bādarāyaṇa is wont to use at the expense of the uninitiated reader. The great Bhāṣyas of Śaṃkarāchārya and Rāmānujāchārya and others show well how the Sūtra text is intentionally made so as to be interpreted in different ways. Thus this uniting tendency is a common property of those otherwise so widely-gulfed compositions, viz. the *Gītā* poem and the 'Vedānta Sūtras.' And this affinity will at least be one reason for the fact that later on the *Gītā* together with the Upaniṣads and the 'Brahma Sūtras' were alleged by Vedāntīs to form 'Prasthāna-traya' (the three foundations) of the Vedānta. And is not the double aspect which Śaṃkarāchārya propagates in his 'Bhāṣya', viz. व्यावहारिक (worldly) पारमार्थिक (spiritual), also an attempt and a very successful one to reconciliate two fundamentally different points of view.

As regards the *Gītā* there are two pairs of opposites our author is endeavouring to unite: one treating of the way to salvation, the other dealing with an ethical antinomy. That the eldest Upaniṣads have found the 'Jñāna-mārga' (the Path of Knowledge) is well-known. It was the discovery of the Absolute and the intuition about its nature which led the Upaniṣad-seers to look out for a way which better than the 'Karma-mārga' (Path of Action) of the Brāhmaṇas was apt to lead to *Brahma*. The 'Jñāna' which was required for it was, of course, not only a knowledge that could be learned, though learning gave a certain approach to it, but in the main an inner realization of an inexpressible metaphysical truth. If learning is already a hard task for many, such a realization will be a still

more formidable thing. The author of the *Gītā* looked with veneration upon this noble path of old, but he felt compelled to offer a second way easier, as he says himself, and more adapted to the lesser faculty of the many—'Bhakti', the love of a personal God. we know from R. G. Bhandarkar's researches that the cult of this God was being followed in the west of India in the second century B. C. But the new cult of love aimed not at outrivalling the way of knowledge, but a sort of union or combination of the two ways to salvation is the aim of the Gītā-Poet.

Besides this reconciliation of a new with an old method as regards salvation, there also was a great ethical question to be solved. With the discovery of the *Jñāna-mārga,* the ritualistic way (*Karma-mārga*) seemed no longer worthy of consideration; but it did not seem to suffice to discard the offerings and other ritualistic performances but also any action at all. As all acts are binding to *Saṃsāra* (the cycle of birth and death), the wise ought to abstain from all actions. This is the old ideal of 'Nivṛtti' (abstention). But now pious men got into conflict. Not every man who sought salvation could follow the ascetic life of pure knowledge; society asked for the fulfilment of the *Dharmā* to which a man was born, and man naturally wished to know how to do his duty in society and not to be punished for it by being bound to eternal *Saṃsāra.* So the 'Gītā' offers a solution, the Divine Charioteer teaching the Pāṇḍu Prince: "Your business is with action alone, not by any means with fruit. Let not the fruit of action be your motive to action. Let not your attachment be fixed on inaction" (II. 47) In this way *Pravṛtti* (activity), when without attachment to the fruit of it but for the sake of *Swadharma* and in obedience to the loving God, comes to stand besides *Nivṛtti,* the old ideal of inactivity, as of equal value. This is the great renunciation of the *Gītā*. *Jñāna-mārga* and *Bhakti-mārga, Nivṛtti* and *Pravṛtti* are being put on the same footing, the wise man who lives but for knowledge and the man of the world who follows his *Dharma* are now possible side by side, and the same relation now exists between the knowledge of 'Brahma' and the love of God; for God is the Absolute, and the way to the Highest is only differentiated by its aspects.

There are other minor reconciliations besides these two great ones. The idea of 'Yoga', for instance, is being enlarged. 'Yoga' is not only a technique leading to trance and liberation, it also is the active devotion to the actions ordained by the loving God through *Swadharma.* *Sāṃkhya* is not only a system of philosophy but also general reflection upon things of the world. And *Sāṃkhya* and *Vedānta* are being blended not by any constraint but by the natural affinity these views possess from their very beginning in ancient Upaniṣadic times. So we get the answer to our question asked in the title of this small paper. The *Gītā* is so popular because it unites the great spiritual antinomies or conflicting laws of Indian metaphysics and ethics into one harmonious whole, because it gives the assurance to the practical man that he also will be able to attain bliss by love of God and fulfilment of *Dharma,* and because by a simple poetical language it speaks to the very heart without discarding the intellect.

The nature of the three Gunas and their effects, etc.

Subject-matter dealt with.	Sattva.	Rajas.	Tamas.
The characteristics of Guṇas.	Illumination of the mind and the senses with intelligence and the power of understanding. (XIV. 11)	Presence of greed, a tendency to engage in worldly activities, undertaking of actions with a selfish motive, restlessness of mind and a yearning for sensual enjoyments. (XIV. 12)	Obscurity of mind and the senses, disinclination to engage in legitimate duties, indulging in prohibited actions and infatuation. (XIV. 13)
The cohesive power of the Guṇas.	Makes one cling to bliss. (XIV. 9)	Makes one cling to activity. (XIV. 9)	Having shrouded wisdom, makes one cling to prohibited actions. (XIV. 9)
The binding nature of the Guṇas.	Sattva, which is illuminating and faultless, being unsullied, binds one by the attachment to bliss and pride of wisdom. (XIV. 6)	Rajas, which is only another name of passion (राग) and is born of cupidity, binds one by action and attachment to its fruit. (XIV. 7)	Tamas, which infatuates all those who identify themselves with the body and is born of ignorance, binds by error, sloth and sleep. (XIV. 8)
The offspring of the Guṇas.	Knowledge. (XIV. 17)	Greed. (XIV. 17)	Error and infatuation. (XIV. 17)
The fruits of the Guṇas.	Pleasure, knowledge, dispassion, etc., all of which are spotless. (XIV. 16)	Pain. (XIV. 16)	Ignorance. (XIV. 16)
The region or womb to which one goes on dying during the preponderance of a particular Guṇa.	Is born as a celestial being in the spotless bright heavens, which are accessible to only those who perform noble deeds. (XIV. 14)	Is born as a human being in this mortal world (earth), which is characterised by attachment to actions. (XIV. 15)	Is born among camels, buffaloes, swine and other stupid creatures. (XIV. 15)
The region or womb to which those established in a particular Guṇa go.	Rise upwards, i. e., are born in the noble and pious family of one who has attained perfection (सिद्ध) or of one who is on the way to perfection. (साधक) (XIV. 18)	Attain a middle position, i. e., are born as human beings attached to activity. (XIV. 18)	Take birth among lower animals as beasts or infernal beings or among evil spirits and other doomed creatures. (XIV. 18)

The Sacrificial Cycle taught in the Bhagavadgita.

By F. Otto Schrader, Ph. D., Kiel University.

The 'Bhagavadgītā', in a passage which may be said to extend from stanza 8 to 16 of Chapter III, teaches the necessity of Yajña or sacrifice in the sense of the Mimāṃsā, i. e., of the 'Apūrva' required for obtaining from the gods the material conditions, such as rain and (through it) food, without which the progress of the world would come to a standstill (cf. Manu III. 75: दैवकर्मणि युक्तो हि बिभर्तीदं चराचरम् ।). And it modifies this old doctrine merely by adding that sacrifice, as any action, should not be done with any selfisn idea but only for the maintenance of the divine law. In order to demonstrate the necessity of Yajña this is shown to be a link within a cycle (Chakra) of causation, i. e., a cycle every link of which is both effect of the preceding and cause of the following link, so that by eliminating even one only of those links the cycle would be destroyed. The demonstration concludes thus: "He who does not promote (or obey, or follow) the wheel (Chakra) thus set in motion, sinful of life and indulging in the senses, he, O son of Pṛthā, lives in vain."

Now the problem arising here is this: Which and how many of the principles mentioned in this connection are meant to constitute the Yajña-chakra ?

But for stanza 15 everything would be perfectly clear. For, the causal series taught in stanza 14 ('Karma' causing 'Yajña' causing 'Parjanya' causing 'Annam' causing 'Bhūtāni') does form into a cycle in so far as the beings ('Bhūtāni') are again linked with 'Karma' as their effect. Nothing more seems to be required.

I have, therefore, long been of opinion that stanza 15 does not belong to the original 'Bhagavadgītā', but is a not very clever interpolation of an orthodox Brahmanic reviser who was afraid that the Chakra might be misunderstood in the sense of the Buddhist 'Pratītyasamutpāda' (or some 'Svabhāvavāda') as something automatic or not requiring a divine author or supervisor.

As regards interpolations, we need not go so far as the late Professor Garbe, who declared no less than one hundred and seventy stanzas of the 'Bhagavadgītā' (including stanzas 9 to 18 of Chapter III) to have been added to the original work. Still the idea of interpolations in the Gītā must not, as is often done in India, be ridiculed as the caprice of hypocritical minds. There is at least one stanza, viz., the words of Arjuna (प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च, etc.) found in some manuscripts and editions at the beginning of Chapter XIII but ignored by most commentators, which is 'undoubtedly' an interpolation. But it is also well worth considering, for example, that stanzas 66 and 67 of Chapter II are not commented upon nor even mentioned in the two oldest Gītā commentaries hailing from Kashmir, and that the great Abhinavagupta rejects as spurious stanzas 16, 17, and 18 of Chapter XIV. *

However, I do not here wish to state that stanza 15 'is' an intepolation. After having indicated that it 'may' be one, I shall now try to explain our passage on the supposition that stanza 15 does belong to the original Gītā. For,

* These points as well as apparent lacunae and wrcng readings in the current 'Gita' will be found discussed in the preface to my edition of the ancient Kashmir recension of the 'Bhagavadgita'.

I am always against 'cutting' the Gordian knot as long as not all efforts have been made to 'untwist' it.

The idea of the 'Yajñachakra' is older than the 'Bhagavadgītā'. It is already found, though in a somewhat different form, in two of the oldest Upaniṣads ('Bṛhadāraṇyaka' VI.II.9-13; and 'Chhāndogya' V. 4—9), where the cremation of the dead body, and, in accordance herewith, every further change of state of the Jīva passing from death to rebirth is described as a sacrifice. At the cremation, so we read, the Other World (असौ लोकः) is the fire in which the gods sacrifice the Sraddhā (i. e., probably, the Karma) of the deceased person who hereby becomes सोमो राजा (assumes a lunar body). He then becomes rain (Vṛṣṭi), then food (Anna), then semen (Retas), then again an embryo (Garbha; Chhānd. Up.) and a man (Puruṣa, Bṛh. Up.). This is the Pañchāgnividyā, so called because of the five fires (असौ लोकः, etc.) through which a man passes from death to birth.

This is an Upaniṣadic elaboration of the more primitive and general theory of the 'Yajñachakra' as transmitted, e. g., in a stanza, quoted in several Gītā commentaries, of the 'Mānava Dharmaśāstra' (III. 76), viz.,

अग्नौ प्रास्ताहुतिः सम्यगादित्यमुपतिष्ठते ।
आदित्याज्जायते वृष्टिर्वृष्टेरन्नं ततः प्रजाः ॥

In close agreement herewith is 'Yājñavalkya-Smṛti' III. 121—124: the essence (rasa) of the sacrifice, after having gratified the gods, is carried by the wind to the moon (Soma) and thence by the rays of the sun to the latter itself. Then the sun sends it back to earth in the form of rain (amṛta), which, on its part, produces food (Anna) from which all creatures (Bhūtāni) spring. "From that food (comes) again sacrifice, again food, again sacrifice, and thus this wheel revolves without beginning and end."

तस्मादन्नात्पुनर्यज्ञः पुनरन्नं पुनः क्रतुः ।
एवमेतदनाद्यन्तं चक्रं संपरिवर्तते ॥

In all of these passages, then, the Chakra has four or five links which are practically the same as those enumerated in 'Bhagavadgītā' III. 14, considering that Karma may be implied in Yajña or vice versa.

But our stanza 14 has a continuation, its last words (यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः) being linked with the following stanza (15), viz.,

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

and thus, apparently, two more links are introduced into the Chakra, viz., Brahma and Akṣara.

So the task that devolves upon us now is to examine the several solutions of this problem that have so far been offered by Indian commentators and Western interpreters of the Gītā.

These solutions, or attempts at such, fall naturally into three groups, according as the two additional principles (Brahma and Akṣara) are understood as (1) belonging to the Chakra, (2) not belonging to it, and (3) partly belonging and partly not belonging to it. To the first group belong (among others) * Rāmānuja, Madhva, and, of Advaitīs, Venkaṭanātha; to no. 2 Sankara and most of his followers; to no. 3 Nīlakaṇṭha. We shall now set forth these standpoints, but, for practical reasons, in the changed order 2, 3, 1, and, first, without regard to the second half of stanza 15.

(2) Sankarāchārya declares Brahma to be the Veda, and Akṣara to be the same as Akṣaram Brahma, i. e., Paramātmā. Of these, the latter, being no possible effect of the Bhūtāni nor, indeed, imaginable as an effect or product at all, is necessarily outside the Chakra. Whether the Veda also is or is not, Sankara does not explicitly state, but evidently he excluded it too because of its Nityatva. Compare Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's explaining

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* I do not claim to know all 'Gita' commentaries and can use for this study only those which I have at hand, excluding even some of them, because their explanations are too little original or (such as Karma--Kriyasakti) too anachronistic (considering the age of the Gita).

'ब्रह्मोद्भवम्' to mean "having the Veda as its authority (pramāṇa, not origin!)", and his epitomising statement: "At the beginning (of creation) there is the manifestation, by the Lord, of the all-manifesting, eternal, faultless Veda; thence (comes) the knowledge of the works (to be done); thence, by their being performed, the production of merit; thence food; thence (the birth of) beings; again, exactly so, the prosecution of works by the beings", etc. Similar is Sankarānanda's explanation: ईश्वरः श्रुतिमुखेन यज्ञसन्ततिं विधाय स्वयमेव चक्रं प्रवर्तितवान् । The Veda is the instrument of the Lord for setting the Chakra in motion and as such outside it, as the key is outside the watch.

(3) Nīlakaṇṭha, agreeing with Sankara as to the meaning of Brahma and Akṣara, is also convinced that the Bhūtāni cannot in any way be the cause of the Veda; still he makes the latter a link of the Chakra in the following way: "First the study, by the beings, of the Veda (takes place); thence their performing the actions (enjoined therein); thence the satisfaction of the gods; thence rain; thence food; thence beings (and) their studying the Veda."

(I) a. Venkaṭanātha, however, is sure that both Brahma and Akṣara belong to the Chakra and as such fully participate in the 'अन्योन्यकार्यकारणभाव' of the links constituting it. He agrees with Sankara in taking Brahma to mean the Veda, but differs from him in explaining Akṣara as the Praṇava or the sacred syllable OM, which, as he points out, is according to 'Gītā' XVII. 23 (ओं तत्सदिति निर्देशः, etc.) the cause of the Veda. But, then, how can the Bhūtāni be the cause of the Praṇava ? In so far, he replies, as the Praṇava is manifested by them through their pronouncing it (उच्चारणेनाभिव्यज्यमानत्वात्).

b. Madhva, who precedes Venkaṭanātha by centuries, has a similar idea as to Akṣara, but not as to Brahma: the word Akṣara, he says, must be taken literally in the sense of the letters (akṣarāni), i. e., the Veda (including the sacred syllable); these are manifested through the beings, and "through them (the letters) the Highest Brahma becomes manifest" (अक्षराणि प्रासिद्धानि । तेभ्यो ह्यभिव्यज्यते परं ब्रह्म······तानि चाक्षराणि भूताभिव्यङ्ग्यानीति चक्रम्). For, says Madhva, "the words such as 'taking rise' mean manifestation (उत्पत्तिवचनान्याभिव्यक्त्यर्थानि)."

(c) Rāmānuja's explanation, like Madhva's, depends on interpreting the causal connection of the links (which in the text is expressed by the words Bhavati, Bhavanti, Sambhavaḥ, Samudbhavaḥ) more liberally, i.e., less literally, than is usually done. For, it is a wrong view, says his chief exponent (Vedāntadeśika), that the idea of the 'Chakra' is necessarily connected with that of a taking rise (न ह्यवश्यमुत्पत्तावैवापेक्षा चक्रत्वहेतुः). But Rāmānuja goes much further than Madhva. He sets forth: (1) that 'Brahma' is a word for 'Prakṛṭi' or primordial matter (used as such, e.g., in 'Bhagavadgītā XIV,3: मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म etc. and in 'Mund.* Up.' I. 1. 9) and thus may also, as is the case in our stanza, denote a product of 'Prakṛti,' viz., the individual body (प्रकृतिपरिणामरूपशरीरम्); (2) that Akṣara, as elsewhere (Bhagavadgītā XV.16: 'कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते' and Svet. Up. I. 10$) means the 'Jīvātmā' or individual soul; (3) that 'Brahmākṣarasamudbhavam' means (not that the body springs from' the soul but) that only in connection with the soul (as its superviser) does the body become an instrument of action (Karma-sādhanam); (4) that not merely the body, but body plus soul (Sajīva Sarīra) as an organic unity depend on food—अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि (st. 14) and that, consequently, (5) stanza 15 does not introduce two new principles, but only mentions once more, but this time with regard to their dual nature, the 'Bhutāni' already mentioned in stanza 14.

Let us now turn to the second half of stanza 15. The two difficulties here are the expressions सर्वगतं ब्रह्म and नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम्.

'सर्वगतं ब्रह्म' is by nearly all commentators taken to refer back to the Brahma mentioned twice in the preceding line. This opinion is in conformity with

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* तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते ।

$ क्षरं प्रधानममृताक्षरं हरः······।

a Mīmāṃsā rule ('वेदो वा प्रायदर्शनात्' M.S. III. 3.2, quoted by Dhanapati to refute Srīdhara), viz., that an ambiguous word should be interpreted in accordance with the undoubted meaning it has elsewhere in the same context. How the Veda may be सर्वगत is easily explained by referring to its 'manifesting everything' (सर्वार्थप्रकाशकत्वम्), while the formidable difficulty here arising for Rāmānuja is overcome by him by boldly declaring that the सर्वगतं ब्रह्म in the second half of st. 15 means 'the body of everyone qualified (for Yajña) (सर्वाधिकारिगत शरीरम्). Srīdhara, on the other hand, though otherwise agreeing with Sankara, says that the words सर्वगतं ब्रह्म may refer either to the 'Akṣara' or (as Sankara says) to the 'Brahma'—'Veda' of the preceding line. And Rāmakaṇṭha,' a Kashmirian philosopher of the tenth century, says that the 'Brahma' of line 1 is the lower (Apara) Brahma or शास्त्ररूप शब्दब्रह्म, and the 'Akṣara' of line 1 as well as the सर्वगतं ब्रह्म of line 2 is the higher (para) Brahma.

नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् means, according to Sankara and his followers, that it (the Veda) treats mainly of sacrifices and the ways of performing them (which seems rather a truism). For Rāmānuja it means that it (the body) "is rooted in sacrifice" (यज्ञमूलम्) i. e., owes its origin to sacrifice. For Srīdhara, again, the meaning is that it (the Highest Brahma) is "obtained" through sacrifice; and just so for Madhva that it is "to be revealed (to us) through sacrifice".

There are practically no contributions by 'Western scholars' to our problem. None of them, so far as known to me, has tried to explain the Chakra. Schlegel's explanation of Brahma and Akṣara as the revealed and the unrevealed Deity (numen revelatum, numen occultum) comes near to Rāmakaṇṭha's and Srīḍhara's. Jacobi and Garbe, taking Rāmānuja's hint, understand Brahma to be the Mahadbrahma—Prakṛti of Gītā XIV, 3. Deussen, as often, has followed Sankara.

It remains for us to decide the 'value' of the Indian comments we have become acquainted with. Here it seems to me but just to begin with a word or two in favour of Rāmānuja. He is the only one who has endeavoured to explain our Gītā passage merely by means of the Gītā itself and the Upaniṣads referred to in it. This is, indeed, the ground on which any investigation on the Gītā should be started, with a view to proceeding, if necessary, to the wider fields of the Mahābhārata, Dharmaśāstras, and Purāṇas. But I do not think that Rāmānuja has been fortunate. His explanation of Brahma and Akṣara is a 'tour de force' which cannot stand sound criticism. I do not believe either that Madhva or Venkaṭanātha has succeeded in proving that stanza 15 is really meant to complete the Chakra, nor that Nīlakaṇṭha is right in including 'Brahma' in it. It is not likely that the Gītā taught a Chakra different from the one, mentioned above, of the Dharmasāstras. But Sankara, in my opinion, comes near to truth, and Rāmakaṇṭha and Srīdhara (the former of which is older than the latter) appear to me to correctly represent the standpoint of the author of the Gītā. But, though I am well aware that the word 'Brahma' does mean the Veda in certain passages of the Vedas, Manu, and Purāṇas, I cannot help believing that in our Gītā passage 'Brahma' means rather 'Brahmadeva, the God Brahmā, with the Veda delivered to him, than merely the Veda. As to the object of stanza 15 as a whole I agree with Madhusūdana and others in seeing in it a digression found desirable in order to emphasize once more the sublime origin of the 'Yajñachakra.'

The Bhagavadgita and the Indian Mind.

By Helmuth Von Glasenapp (Koenigsberg).

It has always appeared peculiar to the Europeans who are either used to believe in a personal God who governs the world from outside or who, to speak with Spinoza, gets merged in Nature, that the Hindus predicate the transcendental and immanent nature of God at one and the same time. The latter see, however, no contradiction therein. The Indian mind can think of God as a personality endowed with a Supernatural body, throning in flawless purity in heaven, whose grace can be attained to by pious devotion, and also as "the substance of the world" and the energy that permeates all things in the universe internally. For the Hindus Theism and Theopanism are no contradictions that preclude each other, but different attempts to dive into the unfathomable nature of God that is so inscrutable to the finite intellect of man. Not only the existence of a number of "Systems of Philosophy" which try to reconcile them (Theism and Theopanism) testifies to this fact but also the great popularity enjoyed by works that propound both of them equally. This, for instance, is the case with the famous *Bhagavadgītā* We see here Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *i. e.* the highest God Viṣṇu, appear in person and proclaim His doctrine of salvation. This God is the eternal, omniscient and omnipotent Lord of the world, who graciously grants salvation to those that believe in Him and worship Him with great devotion. He appears before Arjuna in a brilliant, celestial shape with many eyes and mouths, with a diadem, club and discus in the hands, wonderfully adorned with heavenly chaplets and apparel and fragrant with delightfully pleasant odours. This God that shows Himself in such a palpable form to His devotee is described in another place as follows:

"Undivided, yet remaining divided as it were in beings; supporter of beings; their devourer and their causer." (XIII. 16)*

It is said of Him that all things are strung on Him like pearls on a string:—

"मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ।"

Philologically one has tried to explain the contradictions on the assumption that the *Bhagavadgītā* was originally a theistic didactic poem and has received the theopanistic touches later. It remains, however, still unexplained that the Hindus look upon the *Bhagavadgītā* as a homogeneous work, unexplained also that they see in it up to the present day the work in which their views on the nature of God have found the most beautiful and perfect expression. The mistake committed only too easily by the European judges of the religious views of the oriental people is that they apply to them everywhere the standard taken from the standpoint of Western thought. The people of the East have another mentality. Their metaphysical ideas arise directly out of the depths of their religious consciousness. They express them in the form in which they make their appearance without being confused by any purely intellectual considerations.

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* अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥

Hence they recognize the legitimacy of logically conflicting views even there where we would, in the light of cold reflection, accept one idea and brush the other as incorrect aside. The recognition of facts alone gives us a key to the understanding of the Indian mind, which, if we take the one-sided European standpoint, would ever remain a sealed book to us.*

Lord Sri Krishna and the World of the Future.

By B. K. Venkatachar, B. A., LL. B.

The history of *Bhārata Khanda* is nothing but a continuation of the 'Mahābhārata'. *Mahābhārata* means Great India. We want India to be great. The struggle for the establishment of Righteousness or Dharma-Raj has been going on ever since. It reached its climax with the *Avatāra* of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The Lord incarnates Himself with a set purpose, which is embodied in the following verses uttered by the Lord Himself:—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ।।
परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ।।

(*Bhagavadgita* IV. 6-7)

Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā is the crown or Apex of the *Mahābhārata*. We cannot think of the *Mahābhārata* without the *Gītā*. The kingdom of 'Dharma' was established in 'Bhārata' (India) on the plains of Kurukṣetra when Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the highest pitch of His Divine Consciousness delivered the Message of the *Gītā* to Humanity through his friend, comrade and disciple Arjuna. It is there that Śrī Kṛṣṇa proved his claim to be the greatest Preacher, the birth of Divinity in Humanity, the Incarnation of Godhead on earth, and it is our duty to accept His Gospel, the Gītā, the Bible of Humanity.

The foundations of the present Indian Nationality are now being truly and firmly laid on this bedrock of the *Gītā*. This mighty, gigantic work of building up the new Indian national edifice, requires the active co-operation of every true son of 'Bhārata', which can be lent by every one following the *Dharma* as laid down in the *Gītā*. In the present state of our national evolution it is imperative that our young men should know how India has come to be what she is from her glorious position of old. If Science and Industry cannot wait, History and Politics, too, cannot wait without danger to the Indian Nationality. Our Indian boys and girls, when they are at school durin the most impressionable period of their life have to be imbued with a healthy feeling of pride of their glorious Past and a sense of national self-respect. This cannot be effected without their being given a sound and true knowledge of their national ancestry in the spiritual, intellectual and material fields. The present system of education in India is entirely divorced from the noble Indian culture and tradition of the Past. The school and college courses are fully Western courses entirely unrelated to Indian Life as it was lived in the Past.

That intimate holy relationship between the 'Guru' and the 'Śiṣya',

* Translated by Taracnhad Roy.

which was the outstanding feature of our ancient Educational system, seems to be a thing of the past. When Hindu India and Indian society has fallen into such an Unaryan state, what power on earth can save the Hindu and raise him to the manly Aryanhood which is his birthright. There can be only one answer to this question: that power is the mighty spiritual and moral Soul-Force of the Lord's Song, the *Gītā,* the sweet notes of which, and the occasion for which it was called forth, if infused and wafted into the ears of the Indian youth will make a man of him; and, fortified with this 'Vajrayuta Kavacha'—Spiritual armour, wille boldly step into the World-arena and fight the Battle-field of Life as did Arjuuna on the plains of Kurukṣetra with Śrī Kṛṣṇa as his Guide and 'Sārathī' (Charioteer). Thus will the kingdom of 'Dharma' be established afresh in 'Bhārata Khaṇḍa' by her own sons; and, when India's political destiny is solved, the peace of the world is assured.

लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु ।

The Characteristics of a liberated man according to the Gita.

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ।।

(*Gita* VI. 32)

"He, O Arjuna, who sees equality in all creatures on the analogy of his own self and also views pleasure and pain alike in all, him I hold to be the Supreme *Yogī.*"

According to the *Gītā,* a liberated man is he who is equal-minded in every way to everything at every time. Wherever the *Gītā* speaks of liberated souls it speaks of equanimity also as the very basis of all liberation. According to the *Gītā,* he alone who is even-minded has his understanding well-poised (स्थितप्रज्ञ), he alone is wis, he alone has transcended the triple nature, and he alone is devoted to God and liberated even though living. Such a liberated man is free from all bias in the shape of likesand dislikes, and is balanced in all pairs of opposites such as honour and inslut, gain and loss, victory and defeat, and the same to friend and foe, praise and reproach. Favourable or unfavourable circumstances do not affect him in any way. Never is the equillibrium of his mind disturbed in any way by anything. He does not hate or bear enmity with those who vilify him, nor does he feel attracted towards them who praise him. His attitude is the same towards both. It is the ignorant and unwise who resent vilification and are gratified to hear praise. Those who are of a Sattvic nature take censure as a warning to become more careful in future and feel shy when they hear themselves praised. But the mind of a liberated man is unaffected by both; for he no longer conceives his own being as apart from God who is Truth, Knowledge and Bliss combined, much less distinguish between praise and obloquy. He views everything as an image of the one Supreme Being:

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ।।

(*Gita* XIII. 30)

"When he perceives the diversified existence of beings as based on the idea of One Supreme Being and branching forth from the same, then he finds himself

in the Eternal who is all-truth, all-knowledge, and all-bliss."

In the range of his mental vision nothing remains save the One Supreme Being. Even though dealing with different individuals differently according to the requirements of the case, for the guidance of the public and in order to respect the Divine Law, his mental attitude is the same toward everyone. That is what the Lord says in the following verse:—

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

(*Gita V.* 18)

"The wise look upon a Brahman adorned with learning and culture, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a pariah with the same eye."

The verse quoted above clearly contemplates a different treatment for different individuals. Had it spoken of human beings only, it would have been possible to force on this verse an interpretation discountenancing such differential treatment. But here we find even dogs, elephants and cows mentioned in the same breath with learned Brahmans. No sensible person can ever think of advocating an equal treatment for all various creatures mentioned in this verse. To say nothing of the difference between man and beast, even thedifferent species of animals herein mentioned cannot be put to the same use.

An elephant, for instance, cannot be replaced by a dog, nor can a dog serve the purpose of a cow. Those who seek to draw from this verse a support for their theory of equality in treatment miss the very significance of this couplet, which brings home to us the spiritual elevation of a liberated man by mentioning five such creatures which, though widely differing in the use to which they can be put, nevertheless, reveal to an enlightened soul the same eternal principle, free from all modifications, behind their varied personalities. Even though all differences of time, place, individual or object do not exist for him, he performs his legitimate duties as enjoined by the Śāstras just like those who are not endowed with uch a vision, though without attachment, in order to prevent them from going astray (*Vide Gītā* III. 25-26). For it is the example of great men that the ordinary man of the street tries to follow:

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

(*Gita* III. 21)

"Whatsoever a great man does, that other men also do; whatever he does, is to them the standard of action."

In fact, a liberated soul has nothing to perform and nothing to refrain from; for him there are no obligations and no prohibitions. Nevertheless, the ego of a liberated soul is always at work for the good of the people and with a view to turning aside the seeker after liberation from the wrong path. The love of his heart is flowing equally for all. He looks upon everyone as his own self. Those who are thus established in equanimity are liberated during their very life-time. The follwing verse of the *Gītā* describes the mental condition of such liberated souls.

न प्रहृष्येत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।
स्थिरबुद्धिरसंमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥

(*Gita* V. 20)

"He who with Reason firm and free from doubts is neither filled with joy on obtaining that which is agreeable (*i. e.*, agreeable in the eyes of the world), nor does he grudge that which is unpleasant (*i. e.*, unplesant in the eyes of the world), knows *Brahma* and lives eternally in

union with It. Even in relation to pleasure and pain, 'I' ness and 'my'ness, he is the same to all. Just as an ignorant person looks upon his physical body as his Self, even so, for the knower the whole cosmos constitutes his Self. This does not, however, mean that a pain in another body is experienced by him in the same way as pain in his own body. If one of our fingers is amputated, the other fingers cannot have the same experience of having been amputated; but the Self has the experience of both. In the same manner, the man of knowledge who is established in the Self looks upon all equally as his own Self. If treating a Brahman, a pariah, a cow and an elephant equally in outward behaviour such as dining, etc. be considered as the ideal of equality, it can very easily be realized, in which case the whole animal creation, which indiscriminately follows the dictates of their instinct, may appropriately be regarded as the right type of liberated souls. Those who lack in morals, and beasts naturally behave and like to behave in such a way, and wherever they observe some restraint, they do so out of fear. But this sort of indiscriminate behaviour is not knowledge or wisdom. There are at present men who seek in vain to deal indiscriminately with all as a matter of principle, but they reveal no signs of a liberated soul. To interpret the 'equal vision' of the *Gītā* as 'equal treatment' for all is to murder the meaning of the *Gītā.* Such a liberation can be easily attained by anyone. The state of liberation which has been so highly spoken of in the Śāstras and which has been declared as very difficult to attain, would not be worth anything if it could be attained by such a licentious and indiscriminate behaviour. True knowledge consists in equal vision: equal treatment is of no value. This is something very ordinary and mechanical, which is found even in savages and beasts.

The "equal vision" of the *Gītā* has nothing to do with this. It consists in looking upon friend and foe, honour and ignominy, victory and defeat, praise and obloquy and other such dualities of nature with an equal eye.

This equanimity is real Unity. This is the true nature of God. To establish oneself in this is to attain what has been called the Brahmic conciousness (ब्राह्मी स्थिति). One who is immutably established in this consciousness is never affected by joy and sorrow, attachment and aversion, when brought face to face with a Sattvic, Rajasic or, for the matter of that, even Tamasic work. The equanimity in which he lives is never perturbed. That is why he is called a स्थितप्रज्ञ, a man of stable mind. No quality of nature can agitate his mind, therefore he is beyond nature (गुणातीत). He is ever abiding in the conscious Supreme Being; hence he is the Knower. He perceives nothing else than Vāsudeva, the Supreme Lord of existences, and is therefore a devotee. No action can ever bind him; he is therefore liberated even in his lifetime. Such a liberated man, even while doing all works rightly at the right time, and even though appearing to the gaze of the ignorant as a man with all human imperfections and a disparity in his dealings, is in reality eternally established in the intensely conscious Supreme Being, unified in His Supreme Unity. He is there always in the perfectly Conscious Bliss which is beyond all that a man could conceive as blissful. Our keenest intelligence is too poor to form the merest idea of it. (*Kalyan*)

The Bhagavadgita: A Westerner's Appreciation.

By Revd. Arthur E. Massey.

The basis of India's civilization is the spiritual, the within, the unseen and real; all else is evanescent and therefore of secondary importance. The Western World on the other hand is all for the outer, the tangible, the seen and transitory. She has even prostituted science in the service of destroying human and animal life. India aims at loyalty to her highest religious traditions; but the West alas! although professing a religion of love and self-abnegation totally ignores it whenever it suits her purpose, which is so often that one is forced to wonder whether religion has any hold upon her at all. The secret of India's devotion to her religious ideals may be found in the Bhagavadgītā, which is an epitome of the Vedas in simple, harmonized and humanized form.

It contains a fount of inexhaustible wisdom based upon profound religious experience. For this reason many seriously inclined Westerners, appalled at the materialism of the day, are turning to the East for enlightenment, many of whom have found light and repose in the Gītā. My own pocket edition of the wonderful Hindu poem (W. Q. Judge's rendering) is dated in my own handwriting 1896, and has ever since been my constant "Guide, philosopher and friend." J. Cockburn Thomson's translation and commentary of 1858 is a very scholarly and helpful work, and I still enjoy and appreciate Edwin Arnold's beautiful poetic rendering under the title of "The Song Celestial".

The Bhagavadgītā or "The Sacred Lay", deals with the conflict in a man's soul, agonised and distracted by the seeming cruelty and wickedness of an action he is called upon to perform as a duty. In order to vindicate his brother's title and release the land from the tyrannical oppression of a usurper, the prince Arjuna has collected his forces to wage battle. His heart, however, is torn with anguish at the thought that on both sides are loved comrades and friends. The questions arise: Is it right that he should shed the blood of these people? Is it not a sin to break family ties? On the other hand, can he conscientiously leave the people in a state of cruel bondage?

He places the problem before Srī Kṛṣṇa, the incarnation of God. In the form of a beautiful poem, consisting of eighteen discourses, Srī Kṛṣṇa answers Arjuna's objections, expounding the meaning of life, death, and the hereafter. But first he points out that Arjuna—who is of the Kṣatriya or warrior caste cannot keep away from this battle without neglecting his duty, thus committing sin. Arjuna replies that to him it appears equally sinful to kill fathers, grandfathers, and preceptors. Srī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that he must distinguish between the transitory or unreal and the real or permanent. The body alone is subject to change and decay and must ultimately die. The spirit alone is prmanent; it is not born and cannot die, for it is without beginning or end.

"Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was time it was not; end and beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems".

For these reasons Srī Kṛṣṇa says: "He who regarded this (the dweller in the body) as a slayer and he who thinketh he is slain, both of them are ignorant. He slayeth not, nor is he slain."

The Bhagavadgītā teaches that the attainment of Nirvāṇa (heavenly bliss) through union with the Divine is the aim

and destiny of all men. There are as many different paths as there are philosophers and religions, by which men may travel to the desired end; for none will find liberation unless he has at first purified himself of all mundane desires. Therefore an action must always be performed as a moral duty without desire for reward or the fruits of action. A man's actions, good and evil, react upon himself in exact proportion; for evil actions he receives sorrow and pain, happiness for good deeds. Accustomed as we are to regard this life as our only existence here, this perfect justice is not at once apparant to us; but the Bhagavadgītā teaches the doctrine of reincarnation, so that the "injustices" in our lives are explainable as retributions for misdeeds committed in past lives. The doctrine that existence is governed by the sum of the good and evil in our past lives is called 'Karma', and it is only when we have worked out to the full the consequences of 'Karma' that we may obtain release from rebiṛth and attain Nirvāṇa. Arising out of the doctrine of reincarnation the Bhagavadgītā clearly announces the Messianic conception of the incarnation of God: "Whenever there is decay of righteousness and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I myself come forth; for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness I am born from age to age".

The Indian mind has for long ages past clearly visualised the transitoriness and illusoriness of physical life, and his disgust with life may be attributed to the first blooming of contemplation in India, the first philosophical ideas, of which the earliest development known is the Sāṃkhya system. Kapila is considered not only the founder of that school but the originator of all Indian philosophy; that is to say, he reduced the inspirations of his predecessors to a system, for it is clearly established that singly they must have had an earlier origin.

As Thompson rightly asserts: the very regularity, simplicity, clearness and decisiveness of his arrangement militate forcibly against the supposition that any man should have discovered, worked out and perfected such a system without any groundwork to build upon. We might as well believe Euclid to have been the earliest mathematician, as that Kapila was the first philosopher. As, however, Kapila is the first of whom we have any traces, we may rightly assume that his philosophy was built upon the first great tenet of his predecessors, namely, the individual but connected existence of souls. That man possessing a consciousness of his own existence, with the power of reflection and the thirst for knowledge, through internal investigation should feel convinced, at the very outset, that there existed that within him which was neither matter nor mind, which was eternal and superior to matter, is only natural; but, knowing as he did that each man was more or less like himself and therefore a like soul, contemplation alone could not have enabled him to perceive a common orgin for them. Some existing belief must have aided the earlier philosophers in ariving at this conclusion, and this undoubtedly was the great doctrine of Reincarnation, which originated in India. Upon this doctrine the eternity of the soul was established, the common origin of which was Spirit, which was later only identified with the Supreme Being; and since the individual souls emanated from it, they must also at the dissolution of matter be re-absorbed into it.

The dislike of physical existence, the certainty of its repetition by means of reincartion, the knowledge of the eternity of the soul, and of the existence of spiritual essence into which it would eventually be re-absorbed now induced men to ask how this re-absorption might be hastened, and reincarnation thus avoided. The answer was both natural and noble—KNOWLEDGE. The grades through which the soul had been traced, from inferior states to deity: when the soul had reached this point, it was at the utmost limit of material bodies. What was bebyond ? The essence of spirit, into which it was to be eventually re-absorbed was

How, then, could this point be gained without the long process of passing from body to body ? Of course, by 'rendering the soul as much as possible like that of the superior deity'. And in what did his superiority consist ? The superiority of man over beast was that of his mind, his knowledge; that of the gods over man would be the same; and it was therefore knowledge which made perfect, secured perfection which emancipated the soul from matter. This superior knowledge, said the earlier philosophers, is philosophy itself acquired by contemplation. In the light of this philosophy we can well understand and appreciate the attitude of the devout Hindu towards earthly existence, which to him is a form of imprisonment from which he must earnestly seek emancipation and non-attachment in this life is the first step and the 'open sesame' to perfect freedom. "He whose heart is not agitated in the midst of calamities, who has no longings for pleasures, and from whom the feelings of affection, fear and wrath have departed, is called a sage of steady mind."

The Bhagavadgītā is just one of the many episodes of the Mahābhārata, and certainly the most valuable portion of the work; a unique volume by itself, brimful of sayings of intense beauty and depth of insight. I cannot imagine anyone having once made its acquaintance not being deeply and permanently impressed and influenced thereby. It contains the concentrated essence of spiritual truth, disturbing and tranquilising, uplifting, illuminating and inspiring. It is 'guide, philosopher, and friend' to every pilgrim on the path to the Place of Peace.

It seems almost like presumption to attempt to emphasise the appeal of such a work as the Gītā, for it so eloquently pleads its own cause in trenchant phrase and transcendent poetic beauty. These "Revelations from the Deity" deserve to be more widely read and studied by seekers after truth, both in East and West, and if this Gītā Number of the Kalyana-Kalpataru succeeds in arousing fresh interest among men in "The Song Celestial", it will have achieved a noble and worthy object; for, many more will have learned that:—

"Who hateth naught of all which lives, living himself benign,
Compassionate, from arrogance exempt,
Exempt from love of self, unchangeable
By good or ill; patient, contented, firm
In faith, mastering himself, true to his word,
Seeking me heart and soul; vowed unto me—
That man I love! Who humbleth not his kind,
And is not troubled by them, clear of wrath,
Living too high for gladness, grief or fear,
That man I love!"

And lastly:—

"No heart that holds one right desire,
Treadeth the road of loss! He who should fail,
Desiring righteousness, cometh at death
Unto the Region of the Just; dwells there
Measureless years, and, being born anew,
Beginneth life again in some fair home
Amind the mild and happy."

Millions have heard it (the Gītā), read it, taught it and found in it largest hope for the soul's Godward striving. And their belief has not been utterly vain; for the Gītā has a Gospel to deliver, telling of a consecration of life's every work to the selfless service of God, and an infinite Love that at every place and every time pours forth its illimitable grace to all that seek after it.

—*Dr. L. D. Barnet*

Gita and Bhagavata.

By Kanhaiyalal Poddar.

Both these scriptures are permanent guides for those who seek liberation from the world of Ignorance, Misery and Mortality. The secret knowledge that was unfolded before Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra, where Arjuna considered it a sin to fight the Kauravas and thus recoiled from his duty, has been more fully explained in 'Srīmad Bhāgavata' in different contexts with illuminating discourses fitted therein. Of the importance of the Gītā, it has well been said that "all the Upaniṣads are the cows and the milker is the Son of the cowherd (Nanda), Pārtha (Arjuna) is the calf, the noble-minded and intelligent people are the drinkers of the milk, and the "Divine Song" is the drink of immortality." Of 'Srīmad Bhāgavata', too, it has been said that "the 'Bhāgavata' is the fruit of the wish-yielding tree of Vedas, fallen on the earth from the lips of Suka (the sage Sukadeva who tasted it first of all, also meaning a parrot) filled with, nay, consisting of the flow of immortal sweetness. Drink this immortal drink, which is sweetness itself, till eternity again and again, O ye devout people of this world, who are fond of enjoying this sweetness." Both of these scriptures are the quintessence of the Upaniṣads. The Gītā, in the main, deals with desireless action, detachment from worldly affairs, and single-minded devotion to the Lord. And this is the aim and purpose of 'Srīmad Bhāgavata' also. Compare these two with each other on any particular point and you will find them one in essence. This is the experience of those who are devoted to the study of both these scriptures. Many instances can be quoted in support of this conclusion; but, for want of space, let us content ourselves with only a few.

Both the Gītā and the Bhāgavata are mainly devotional. After revealing Himself to Arjuna in His World-form, the Lord at the end of the eleventh chapter of the Gītā points out to the seekers of the Divine the way to attain liberation in the following stanza:—

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥

"Perform My works, accept Me as the Supreme Being and object, become My devotee, be free from attachment and without enmity to all existences; for such a man comes to Me."

Who is referred to by this 'Me', 'My' or 'Mine', this 'I' of the Divine ? Does it denote the Unqualified 'Brahma' or Personal God ?

In the Gītā the word 'I' occurs in both these senses. For instance, when the Gītā says:—

"At the end of a series of births, comes the Knower to Me......",

the 'Me' expressly means the ineffable unqualified 'Brahma'. Then, again, when the Gītā says:—

"I cannot be seen by the Veda or austerities, or even gifts or sacrifice, in this way as you have seen Me.",
the 'I' and 'Me' obviously denote the Qualified Brahma or Personal God. It is with a view to clearing this doubt that Arjuna asks the following question:—

"Those devotees who thus by constant application of their mind worship Thee, and those who seek union with the unmanifest Immutable, which of these have the greater knowledge of Yoga ?" (Gītā XII. 1)

Arjuna makes a distinction between the two and wants to know which of the two he is called upon to adore. To this question the Lord replies:—

"Those who with their mind fixed on Me and by constant union, possessed

of supreme faith, worship Me, I hold to be the most perfect in Yoga." (Gītā XII. 2)

And then the Gītā goes on to say that "those also who seek union with the Indestructible Reality which is indefinable, unmanifest, omnipresent, unthinkable, immutable, constant and eternal, with their senses completely controlled, and seeing the one Self in all things and engaged in doing good to all existences, they, too, come to Me. But this is a less direct and more arduous way, the way of those whose mind is set on the Unmanifest;for to attain the Unmanifest is a hard ascent for one who is embodied." (Gītā XII. 3—5).

That is to say, the ultimate goal reached in both the cases is the same, i. e., the attainment of the Divine. But the way to the Unmanifest is a hard struggle involving, in the first place, a complete surrender to the Seer-Guru and then an arduous course of constant hearing, pondering over and meditating; while the way of devotion to a Personal God is easier and does not involve any painful struggle with the manifold demands of his nature. The only requirement on the way is single-minded self-surrender to the Divine. Thus the Lord indicates the easier course:—

"Those who surrender all their actions to Me and are devoted to Me and none else, and remain in their hearts reposed in Me, swiftly do I deliver out of the sea of death." (Gītā XII. 6-7)

Thus, according to the Gītā, the devotees of a Personal God are in a better position than those who are devoted to the Unmanifest.

This truth as pointed out by the Gītā has been fully explained in various contexts in 'Srīmad Bhāgavata.' The Devas thus praise the Lord in the third Skandha:—

"Those who, having given up their hearts, free from all impurities, to Thee, O Lord, out of overflowing love for Thee, hear tales of Thy doings with rapture and obtain the knowledge which is the very essence of all renunciation, attain to Thy Blissful abode without any painful struggle; even so those who seek union with the Unmanifest,Immutable 'Brahma'by fixing themselves in a perfectly equanimous state of mind and by conquering the powerful Māyā by the force of 'Yoga', attain to Thee and none else. But these seekers after the Unmanifest have to pass through a long painful struggle, and it is at the far-off end of the struggle that they attain to Thee; while those who worship Thee in Thy Manifest form by an easier course of hearing and meditating, get themselves liberated without that painful struggle." (V. 45,46)

Again, the same teaching is imparted to King Pṛthu by Sanaka and others:—

"O king, the seekers after the Immutable, Unmanifest Spirit cannot, by restraining themselves in mind and senses and fixing themselves in an immovable state of mind, untie the knot of Ignorance in their heart in the way the Bhaktas do by fixing their mind on the lustre of the lotus-like feet of the Lord. And why ? Because, though seekers, they are of an emptied mind and inactive senses. Therefore do thou adore Srī Vāsudeva who transcends all struggle." (IV.xxii. 39)

Again, in the tenth Skandha, Brahmā and other gods praise the Lord Vāsudeva, still in the womb of Devakī,in the following words:—

"O Lotus-eyed One, those who are not devoted to Thy lotus-like feet and are attached to the Unmanifest, Unqualified Brahma, and thus consider themselves to be liberated or wise,have to undergo many hardships,and, even after attaining a high status, do fall from it; for they do not love Thy lotus-feet. But,O Mādhava, those who are bound to Thine feet by their hearts are never led astray; for Thou art their Saviour. Thus they move about in the world fearlessly,stepping over the various obstacles."

We do not propose to add any more instances to show the very close similarity between the Gītā and the Bhāgavata.

But we should like to make it clear to our readers that the very composition of 'Srīmad Bhāgavata' is based on this particular teaching of the Gītā. In the very beginning of Srīmad Bhāgavata the sage Nārada imparts this teaching of the Gītā to the dejected Vedavyāsa. In the Gītā the teaching is addressed to Arjuna, the great warrior, who fought in battle the greatest of the gods, Saṃkara, and gave Him perfect satisfaction by his valour and skill, and who supplied the occasion for the teaching of the Gītā by his dejection and recoiling from battle at the sight of his grandfather Bhīṣma and Guru Droṇa and all his near and dear ones who had arrayed against him. The teaching of Srī Nārada in the 'Bhāgavata' is addressed to Bhagavān Vedavyāsa, who, after having composed the seventeen Purāṇas and the 'Mahābhārata' finds himself in a like state of dejection. Srī Nārada tells Srī Vyāsa to describe the life and doings of the Lord, for he says: "Actions with desire are of no worth, they are painful both in their performance and consequences. We need not even speak of these actions. But even abstraction and unadulterated knowledge of the immobile Spirit, the adoration of the Unqualified 'Brahma' has no mounting grace without devotion to the Manifest Divine" (I. v.12). Emphasising thus the importance of devotion, Srī Nārada explains the matter in the same way as has been done in the Gītā and which we have referred to above:—

"By recourse to the path of resignation the rarest only among men can, after completing the long course of discipline and knowledge, attain to the bliss of union with the Unmanifest Spirit beyond the endless Nature" (I.v. 16). The path is beset with great difficulties." But,

"If there be a man who has given up his 'Swadharma', while he loves and adores the lotus-like feet of Srī Hari and, before reaching the goal, is led astray or is dead, is it that in that state he is cursed and doomed ? No, never. On the contrary, one devoted to 'Swadharma' and not to the Lord can attain nothing. Those who have once tasted the bliss of devotion to the Lord can never give it up here in this life or in lives hereafter." (I. v. 17—19)

Now this very teaching recurs in a still more lucid form in the eleventh Skandha where Srī Nārda imparts it to Vasudeva:

"The greatest good for the common run of mankind in this world, who confine themselves to their physical being and are thus always tormented by fear and anxiety of one kind or another, lies in loving devotion to the lotus-like feet of the never-failing and ever-present Lord, where all fears subside. The ways pointed out by the Lord to those who seek, but know not, for attaining Himself are in themselves divine, and one who acts up to them never fails, never falters, nor falls even when he runs with eyes closed." (XI. 33—35)

In the short compass of this article, only a rough sketch of the ways of Devotion and Knowledge as pointed out in the 'Gītā' and the 'Bhāgavata' has been attempted. It has been shown that both these scriptures are one in their teachings. But this oneness is not limited only to the ways of Knowledge and 'Bhakti'. If one studies the books carefully, he will find this oneness in every respect. There are chapters like the "Vibhūtiyoga" which in both are almost the same, and so are verses like 'पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयम्' etc.

(Kalyan)

The Gītā is the oilless lamp eternally burning in our Temple of Knowledge. Let all the philosophies of the West shine their brightest, the Light of our Little Lamp will shine above them all, eclipsing them.

—Dwijendra Nath Tagore.

The Greatest Hindu Bible.

By Swami Yogananda.

THREEFOLD MEANING OF THE HINDU AND CHRISTIAN BIBLES.

All Oriental Scriptures, such as the 'Bhagavadgītā' or the Hindu Bible, and Christian Bible, have a threefold meaning. In other words, the Scriptures deal with the three factors of human beings, namely, the material, the mental and the spiritual. Hence, all true Scriptures have been so written that they serve to be beneficial to the body, mind, and soul of man. True Scriptures are like the wells of Divine waters, which can quench the threefold—material, mental, and spiritual—thirsts of man. In addition, the Scriptures, in order to be worth while, should really help the business man, the mental man, and the spiritual man. Although both the material and the psychological interpretations of the Scriptures are necessary, it should be remembered that the scriptural authors undertook with great pains to point out to man that the spiritual interpretations are of supreme importance to him.

A materially or intellectually successful man may not be the truly, scientifically successful man, who makes a perfect success of life; whereas, a spiritual man is the happy "all-round" man, who is healthy, intellectual, contented, and truly prosperous, with all-satisfying wisdom. Since by intuition the spiritual authors first sought to make man primarily spiritual, I give the spiritual interpretation with psychological and material interpretations interwoven. These interpretations will help alike the spiritual aspirant, the intellectual man, and the bnsiness man.

SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF BHAGAVADGITA.

The "Bhagavadgītā" is found in one of the Indo-Aryan epics, the "Mahābhārata." One of the greatest sages of India, Vyāsa, compiled this "Bhagavadgītā" or "Song of the Spirit" in the form of a dialogue between the King and warrior-prophet Srī Kṛṣṇa, and his disciple. The discussion took place on the fields of Kurkṣetra in India on the eve of a battle there. This Holy Testament of the Hindus (this 'Bhagavadgītā') is composed of seven hundred verses, and is included in Book VI 'Bhīṣma-Parva' of the 'Mahābhārata' epic, from the 25th to the 42nd chapters. The 'Bhagavadgītā' is one of the greatest psycho-spiritual treatises of the world.

The greatest Hindu scriptures are the four Vedas. One hundred and eight Upaniṣads were written, containing the essence of the four Vedas. The six systems of Hindu philosophy, 'Sāṃkhya', 'Yoga', 'Vedānta', 'Mīmāṃsā', etc., contain the essence of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, and the 'Bhagavadgītā' is the essence of the six philosophies, 108 Upaniṣads and the four Vedas. By an intuitive study of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and the six systems of Hindu philosophy, or else by contacting the cosmic consciousness, one can explain the 'Bhagavadgītā'. The interpretation of the 'Bhagavadgītā', as received from within, is now being given here, for the first time. The 'Bhagavadgītā' was very cleverly compiled by Sage Vyāsa, in which he interwove historical and psychological truths. Thus, the 'Gītā' is true historically, but it is at the same time a psychological word-painting of the tumultuous inner life of man. The principal purpose in thus interweaving history and psychological truths on the part of the sage Vyāsa, was to hide the deep spiritual truths in a hard shell of historical facts, so that only the truly wise would break through the shell and find the spiritual kernel within. This shell of historical facts served

also as a protection for the inner meanings (the deep, inner spiritual truths) from the gaze of ignorant eyes. Vyāsa's purpose is clearly seen in that he mentions the actual battle on the field of Kurukṣetra only a little here and there in the first and second chapters, but then launches deeper into spiritual discussions.

HISTORICAL TRUTH IN BHAGAVADGITA.

In the west of India there ruled over Gujerat a divine warrior, King Kṛṣṇa. This is told in the 'Mahābhārata,' which was compiled in its extant form during the epic age. *

RENUNCIATION OF FRUITS OF ACTION.

We hear of prophets in the woods who were men of renunciation only; but Kṛṣṇa was one of the greatest of all prophets because he was a prophet at heart, while at the same time he performed the duties of a king. His life demonstrates that the renunciation of action is a conflicting doctrine: what is really necessary is the renunciation of the fruits of action. God has sent man into this life so circumstanced with hunger and desires that he needs must work. Without work human civilization would be a jungle of disease, famine, and confusion. If all the people in the world should leave their material surroundings and live in the forests, then the forests would have to be transformed into cities, or else all would die because of lack of sanitation.

Then, again, material civilization is full of imperfections and misery. What possible remedy can be advocated? Kṛṣṇa's life demonstrates that, according to his philosophy, it is not necessary to flee from the hobgoblin of material life. The problem can be solved by bringing God there where He has placed us; and Heaven necessarily, then, must come in the mind where God's contact reigns, no matter what the environment may be. "A Heaven without Thee, O God, I want not! I love to work in the factory if I can but hear Thy voice in the noisy wheels of the machinery. A material life without Thee, O God, is a source of physical misery, disease, crime, ignorance, and unhappiness."

COMPLETE RENUNCIATION.

Complete renunciation has been the theme of many, even of the oriental Christian Bible—"Take no heed for the body, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall wear." Swami Sankarāchārya, the founder of the Swami order, advocated complete renunciation. Other great prophets also have done so, with the theory that material desires might be a cause of hindrance in the path of self-realization. On the other hand, those who plunge deeply into material life grow away from God. They wallow so deeply in the mud of mundane worries that they cannot extricate themselves and thus walk freely along the path of self-realization. To avoid these two extremes of (1) renunciation from the world, and (2) drowning in material life, man should so train his mind by constant meditation that he can perform the necessary dutiful acions of his daily life with the consciousness of God within. All business men and women should remember that their worldly life can be freed from endless physical and mental ills, provided they add daily deep meditation to their daily business in the office or to their family contacts.

The doctrine of the Bhagavadgītā stands as the only doctrine suited to our modern busy life of many worries. To work without the peace of God is Hades; and to work with God's happiness ever bubbling in the soul is to carry a usable, portable Paradise within you wherever you go. To be constantly worried in a large estate is to live in Hades; to live in a rickety shack with that inner, boundless soul-peace is real Paradise. Whether in a palace or under a tree, we must carry this inner Paradise always. Thus does the doctrine of Kṛṣṇa strive to teach the modern business man. A grasping

* (1400-1000 B. C.)

ever for more money, a plunging deeper into more prolonged work with attachment or blindness will produce misery. The outward renunciation of material things with still an inner attachment to them, leads to hypocrisy and delusion. One must be really convinced in his heart that God-happiness is preferable to sense-pleasures.

MODERATION IN EVERYTHING.

The path advocated in the 'Bhagavadgītā' is the moderate, medium, golden path both for the busy businessman and for the highest spiritual aspirant. Most Christians follow neither the path of complete renunciation as Jesus advised when He said, "Sell all that ye have and follow me", nor do they know how to find God in their busy material life. For such to follow the paths advocated by 'Bhagavadgītā' would be their salvation, for it is a book of universal self-realization; it embraces the underlying scientific truths of the Oriental Christian Bible, and also of all other spiritual scriptures.

INTELLECTUAL, HISTORICAL, AND SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF BHAGAVADGITA.

Just as twelve years of listening to lectures ABOUT oranges without ever TASTING them would give no REAL knowledge of them, so a lifelong theoretical study of the 'Bhagavadgītā' will produce very little intuitive spiritual knowledge. It was not compiled for dry intellectualists to perform intellectual gymnastics with its sayings for the entertainment of intellectual dogmatists, but rather its purpose was to show to a man living in the world how he could live a balanced life and at the same time actually contact God by following the step-by-step methods of self-realization. Therefore, I shall not dwell long on the history of the 'Bhagavadgītā', nor on the historical analyses of the intellectualists, but shall dig into its heart with the pickaxe of deep concentration, and bring forth its spiritual fountains which will quench the thirst of the deep spiritual seeker. The best way to judge the various interpretations of the 'Bhagavadgītā' is to ask yourself how much lasting, spiritual benefit you derived from perusing them.

HISTORY OF THE KURUS AND PANDUS.

Long ago Vichitravīrya was king of Hastināpura in India. Two sons, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu, were born to him. The elder, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, had one hundred sons; but Pāṇḍu, the younger, had five most pure warrior sons. Dhṛtarāṣṭra became king, but he was blind; so his son, Duryodhana, ruled in his stead. By a clever play of the dice, Duryodhana filched from the Pāṇḍus their kingdom, and sent them into the forest into exile for twelve years, after which he promised to allow them to try to regain their lost kingdom. At the allotted time, the good Pāṇḍus returned and demanded their kingdom; but the Kurus refused to part with any piece of land, even as long and as broad as the point of a needle.

CAUSE OF THE BATTLE AT KURUKSHETRA.

Therefore, the five famous Pāṇḍu brothers sought the aid of the political prophet, Kṛṣṇa, the then reigning King of Gujerat, who then offered to become the charioteer and chief counsellor of war to Arjuna, one of the five warrior brothers. The crooked Kurus, led by Duryodhana, and the pure Pāṇḍus, led by Arjuna, gathered together on the holy field of Kurukṣetra (a modern small city in India). King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, being blind, requested Vyāsa to tell him about the battle. Instead, Sage Vyāsa gave him a man of impartial vision, Sañjaya, whom he then gifted with spiritual television. Thus he could see clairvoyantly from afar the forces of Kurus and Pāṇḍus gathered on the field of battle. The 'Bhagavadgītā' opens with the blind King Dhṛtarāṣṭra asking Sañjaya thus: "Gathered together on the holy plain of Kurukṣetra, eager for battle, my children, the Kurus, and the Pāṇḍus, what have they been doing ?" Throughout the 'Bhagavadgītā' Sage Vyāsa took a real battle which actually once took place on the field of Kurukṣetra,

and the names of a few warriors; and he interwove with them psychological names and characters, and thus built out a description of a psychological war between man's crooked mental tendencies and physical sense-appetites (the Kurus), and his good discriminative tendencies, (the Pāṇḍus). When we take many of the Sanskrit names he used, and analyse the roots of the words used as the titles of the warriors, we find a psychological tendency spoken of as a warrior; for instance, take "Dhṛtarāṣṭra" which means one 'who holds the reins of the senses or the blind mind.' This is a description of the mind, which gives co-ordination to the senses as the reins keep together the several horses of a chariot. The body is the chariot, the owner of the body, the soul; the charioteer is the Intelligence. The horses are the senses, and the mind is said to be blind because it cannot see without the help of the senses and the intelligence.

MACROCOSMIC INTERPRETATION.

Vyāsa, representing allegorically God the Father, became immanent in the dual positive-negative Cosmic Vibration, which in turn gave birth to two sons,—Dhṛtarāṣṭra, representative of matter, and Pāṇḍu, representative of Intelligent Life which governs all matter, or, as in the Christian Bible, God the Father,—the Son, Christ Intelligence, or Pāṇḍu,—and Holy Ghost, (Holy Vibration).

MICROCOSMIC INTERPRETATION.

Vyāsa, the soul, was the reflection of God the Father. A reflection of the sun can only partially (half) represent the real sun. Hence, Vyāsa was spoken of as the half-brother of Vichitravīrya or God the Father. As the sun becomes a thousand suns when reflected in a thousand cups filled with water, so also God the Father, reflected in the bodies of many men, becomes many souls. Vyāsa represents the original passively—active soul in man, which is responsible for creating the two children, the blind King Mind (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) and the pure King Discrimination (Pāṇḍu.)

"Pāṇḍu" is derived from a word which means "that which signifies intelligence". The senses and the blind king Mind, and the pure Discrimination, all reigned in the Kingdom of the Body. The name of the field of battle stands for the body thus: Kurukṣetra for (Kuru—action; Kṣetra—field) signifies the field of action. Originally, in childhood the kingdom of the body is reigned over principally by Pure discrimination and calmness. The eldest of the five Pāṇḍu brothers was Yudhiṣṭhira, 'Yudhi Sthiraḥ'—who is calm in psychological battles); calmness is thus the eldest offspring of discrimination. The other four brothers were Bhīma, (Power of Vitality), Arjuna (Self-Control, he who is non-attached), Nakula, (Power to Obey Good Rules), and Sahadeva (Power to stay away from Evil). But after childhood the Ego, the Pseudo-soul, or the body-bound soul, (Duryodhana, the eldest child of restless mind), and the hundred sense-inclinations, all offsprings of restless mind, by a clever dice-play with sense-lures and material desires, filched the bodily kingdom from Pure discrimination and its kindred Princely faculties, and sent them into exile for twelve years. When bad sense-habits are once well established in the body, good habits and wisdom are usually banished for at least twelve years. Complete physiological and mental changes as well as the creation of new habits are possible after twelve years. The story of the 'Bhagavadgītā' allegorically tells us how, after the bad habits had reigned for twelve years in the bodily kingdom, the good habits, being now reawakened by discrimination, tried to return after their twelve years of banishment with the aid of Kṛṣṇa or Soul-force. In like manner, after the growing youth has gone through evil experiences for twelve years, and taken many a "hard knock" under the sense-regime of greed, anger, sex, jealousy and egoism, then discrimination and the warriors of calmness, vital force and self-control try to return after twelve years of banishment by the bad sense-habits and seek to regain their lost bodily kingdom. But the crooked Kurus, or men-

tal tendencies, with their sense-armies refuse to give in or part with their kingdom of the body, which originally belonged to the discriminative faculties.

So Kṛṣṇa the GURU, or the actively awakened Soul, or meditation-born Intuition, comes to aid Self-control, or Arjuna, and the other discriminative tendencies of calmness, 'Prāṇāyāma' (controlling the life-force in the nerve-telephones by switching it off from the senses), thereby shutting out the invading senses from the castle of discriminating concentration and prescribing rules of conduct to fight the Psychological battle with Ego and its army of the following bad mental tendencies of greed avarice, hate, jealousy, wickedness, sex-madness, meanness, cruelty, covetousness, ill-will, ill-feeling, spiritual procrastination, false sense of delicacy, pride of caste or social birth, high-handedness, physical laziness, spiritual indifference, unwillingness to meditate, "putting off of meditation until tomorrow", sex-greed, impurity of body, mind, and soul, anger, desire to hurt others, disloyalty to God, ungratefulness to God, saucy temper, unkindness, lack of vision, lack of foresight, physical, mental, and spiritual ignorance, inharmony, harshness of speech, selfishness, harshness of thought, evil actions, joy in evil, sense-attachment, delusion, bitterness, bitterness of mind, seeing evil, thinking, willing, feeling and remembering evil, fear of disease, worry, fear of death, ignorance of the blissful nature of soul, lack of initiative, quarrelsome attitude, swearing, speaking evil, disease of the body, sex-abuse, immoderation, too much sleeping, too much eating, too much pretending goodness and shunning God.

So you see that the scene of battle is the body. There Kṛṣṇa, soul-force, with the five Princes of discrimination and its warrior tendencies, is trying to regain his lost kingdom by driving away entrenched evil and sense-habits. These sense-Bolsheviks, occupying the kingdom of the body, have brought only sickness, mental worries and the pestilence of ignorance and spiritual famine, due to the shortage of wisdom in the bodily kingdom. So, again, the awakened soul-force and the meditation-evolved self-control must seize the kingdom of the body, and establish there Peace, wisdom, abundance and health, and place the banner of the Spirit therein.

The Raison d'etre for the Incarnation of God.

Whenever there is decay of righteousness (*Dharma*), O Bhārata, and there is exaltation of unrighteousness (*Adharm*, the opposite of *Dharma*, all that is disorderly, against the nature of things), then I Myself come forth.

For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness (*Dharma*), I am born from age to age.

He who thus knoweth My divine birth and action, in its essence, having abandoned the body, cometh not to birth again, but cometh unto Me, O Arjuna.

(*Gītā IV. 7-8-9*)

Characteristics of a demoniacal nature.

(Described in verses 7 to 21 of Chapter XVI of the Gita)

1. Those having a demoniacal nature cannot discriminate between what should be done and what should be avoided.
2. They are unclean in body as well as in mind.
3. Their conduct is reproachable.
4. They are given to lying.
5. They believe that the universe has no moral basis, no reality (to justify one's having an altruistic outlook), that it has no ruler (God) and has sprung up from a union of the male and female principles.
6. They further believe that the world is for enjoyment only.
7. Being thus deluded, they forget their spiritual nature.
8. Their intellect gets dull.
9. They harm every one.
10. They perpetrate cruel acts.
11. They practise dissimulation and assume false appearances in order to make a favourable impression on others.
12. They attach undue importance to their own selves.
13. They are always puffed up with pride.
14. They are haunted by desires of various kinds.
15. Having embraced atheistic ideas, they indulge in immoral practices.
16. They are tormented by endless worries which do not leave them till death.
17. The motto of their life is "Eat, drink and be merry", and they take it as the culmination of their happiness.
18. They are held in bondage by fetters of hundreds of ambitions and expectations.
19. They are given over to lust and anger, taking them to be the mainstay of their very existence.
20. They amass wealth by unlawful means for indulging in luxuries and sense-enjoyments.

21. They are always busy calculating what they have already acquired and what more they are going to acquire in future, how much wealth they already possess and how much more they expect in the near future.

22. They kill others in a vindictive spirit and glory over the feat, and further expect to make short work of the rest of their enemies also in due course.

23. They regard themselves as supreme.

24. They further regard themselves as the sole enjoyers of worldly enjoyments.

25. They also look upon themselves as accomplished and perfect.

26. They pride themselves on their physical strength.

27. They feel happy in their possession of worldly objects.

28. They regard themselves as wealthy.

29. They pride themselves on their high pedigree.

30. They look upon themselves as peerless in every way.

31. They proclaim with a sense of pride their intention to perform sacrifices and give alms, and exult on the prospect of earning great fame thereby.

32. Their mind is always wandering here and there.

33. Their reason is clouded by the veil of infatuation.

34. They are extremely fond of worldly enjoyments.

35. They regard themselves as superior to all.

36. They are arrogant and supercilious.

37. They are filled with pride and intoxication of wealth.

38. They perform sacrifices for ostentation and name only, contrary to scriptural ordinance.

39. They are given over to egoism and proud of their physical strength, affluence, position, offspring, caste, colour, appearance, youth, nationality, learning, etc. and indulge their passions as their very life-breath.

40. They are given to vilifying others.

41. They hate God dwelling in the hearts of all.

(Lust, anger and greed are the chief among these evils. The natural consequences of all these demoniacal properties are bondage, repeated incarnation in lower bodies and finally sinking into the lowest scale of evolution or perdition.)

The Age of the Gita and allied Topics.

By C. V. Vaidya, M. A., LL. B.

In response to the request of the editors of the "Kalyan" of Gorakhpur, I propose to place my views on the "Age of the *Gītā*" and two allied topics before the readers of the "Kalyan" as succinctly as possible. When was this unique work composed is the question which naturally arises in every mind, and I propose to place my answer to this question before the curious readers of the "Kalyan."

The *Gītā* itself purports to state that it was taught by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna, hero of the Mahābhārata war, on the field of battle, before the fight commenced, but when the fighters were actually facing each other, ready to commence the fight. It follows therefore that the date of the *Gītā* is the date of the commencement of the Bhārata fight. This date is the subject of dispute between European scholars, followed by some Indian scholars, and myself. I hold that the date assigned to the fight by all ancient Indian writers, especially astronomers, is the correct one, viz. Mārgaśīrṣa śuddha 13, Pre-Śaka 3180 (3102 B. C.). I will not enter into details of the controversy here, but merely indicate my grounds.

The Bhārata heroes are referred to in the 'Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa', and the date of this Brāhmaṇa has been fixed bp Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit, a great modern Indian astronomical researcher, at about 3,000 B. C. from the astronomical statement in it that the Kṛttikās rise exactly in the east. Attempt has lately been made by Winternitz to dislodge this date by suggesting that the statement (एता वै कृत्तिकाः प्राच्यो दिशो न च्यवन्ते) in the 'Śatapatha' means only that the Kṛttikās come on the east line and not that they rise in the east. But this rendering is negatived by the very next sentence "all other stars deviate from the east" (सर्वाणि ह वा अन्यानि नक्षत्राणि च्यवन्ते) in the 'Śatapatha', as shown by me in detail in an article published in the Bhandarkar Research Institute Journal. If, then, Parīkṣit and others, mentioned in the 'Śatapatha' of 3,000 B. C. as recent kings, are taken to be the grandson and great grandsons of Arjuna, the date of the fight, viz. one year before the commencement of the Kali age given by all Indian astronomers, or 3102 B. C., is perfectly borne out by the 'Śatapatha' statement. European scholars, and some Indian scholars, too, place the fight about 1400 B. C. on the strength of the pedigrees of kings given in Purāṇas from the Nine Nandas to Bṛhadratha, son of Jarāsandha. The evidence of the Purāṇas, however, has no value when compared with the evidence of the 'Śatapatha'. Indeed, Purāṇa genealogies are not reliable, particularly for ancient dynasties, especially as they are contradicted by the evidence of Megasthenes, recorded about 320 B. C., as shown by me in detail in "Mahābhārata-Mīmāṃsā", a Hindi work. This short summary of the controversy will show to the reader that the year of the Bhārata fight must be taken to be 3102 B. C.

With regard to the exact day of the fight, there is also a controversy between me and my friends Mr. Karandikar and others. But the difference is only of two days. Whereas I hold that the fight commenced on Mārgaśīrṣa śuddha 13, Mr. Karandikar holds that it commenced on 11. The Gītā Jayantī day as fixed by Mr. Karandikar and others who follow him is, therefore, Mārgaśīrṣa śuddha 11. 'Ekādaśī' day has a certain attraction in the Vaiṣṇava worship, no doubt; but the statements in the *Mahābhārata* and the course of the fight as described therein lead to no other date than *Śuddha* 13, and this is the date accepted by Nīlakaṇṭha and other old writers and commentators of the *Mahābhārata*. In this view also, therefore, I am supported by ancient authorities; and I hope the Jayantī will be held on Mārgaśīrṣa Śuddha 13 every year. Mr. Karandikar and the Gītā Dharma Mandal in Poona have so far accepted this date fixed by Nīlakaṇṭha and other ancient writers that they have consented to hold the Jayantī for three days continually, viz. from Ekādaśī to Trayodaśī. To speak in English dates, the Mahābhārata fight commenced in December 3102 B. C. and the 'Gītā' was preached on the morning of that day.

Having placed before the reader the day by date and year on which the doctrines of the 'Gītā' were preached by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, we go on to state that this cannot be the date of the 'Gītā' as it is before us. For the first chapter, etc. cannot have belonged to the teaching as it was actually given. The whole story is told afterwards by some one, and that is Vyāsa undoubtedly. As the teaching of Christ is given in several books of the New Testament written by St. John and others, so Vyāsa may be taken to be the writer who first recorded this teaching in a work to be studied and recited. Every reader will admit that the words (अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः) cannot really be Śrī Kṛṣṇa's; for there could not have been any work before Him which could be recited or studied (अध्येष्यते): we must accept that these words are those of Vyāsa who first wrote his great work on the Bhārata fight. When this work was written by Vyāsa cannot be difinitely stated. He must, however, have done it within a few years of the fight, and we may roughly say that the date of the original 'Gītā' is somewhere about 3100 B. C.

But it is clear that the work as it is before us is not exactly that of Vyāsa. We know for certain that the original work of Vyāsa, called 'Jaya' or Victory (ततो जयमुदीरयेत्, जयो नामेतिहासोऽयम्) was twice recast or further expanded, once by Vaiśampāyana, who related 'Bhārata' to Janamejaya, and again by Sauti, who related it to Śaunaka and other Brahmans in Naimiṣāraṇya. For the original work of Vyāsa could not have given the story of Janamejaya and his 'Sarpasatra' and also how Vaiśampāyana related 'Bhārata' during the leisure hours of this sacrifice. Nor could Vaiśampāyana's work contain a mention of the fact of Sauti's reciting it to the Ṛṣis. This work also has three names, viz. 'Jaya', 'Bhārata', and 'Mahābhārata', and the extent of 'Bhārata' of Vaiśampāyana is also given as 24, 000 Ślokas, while that of *Mahābhārata* is, as is well-known, one lakh of verses. The original of the 'Gītā', no doubt, belonged to the 'Jaya' (Victory) of Vyāsa; but the work as it is before us belongs, in our opinion, most certainly, to the 'Bhārata' of Vaiśampāyana and not to the *Mahābhārata* of Sauti. The

arguments for this view are given at length in the last chapter of "Mahābhārata-mīmāṃsa"; but it may here be stated briefly that the greatness of this work is described even in the *Mahābhārata* itself wherein it is related that Arjuna again asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa to teach him what was taught on the battle-field. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa answered: "What I told you then, being in the required Yogic mood (योगयुक्तेन चेतसा), I cannot tell you again. I will tell you, however, another episode." And thus the 'Anugītā' is introduced in the *Mahābhārata*. This is the experience of every writer. What is written in the first impulse, and with the mind full of the subject treated, cannot be written again (supposing the first writing is lost). Then, again, the verses in the 'Gītā' are constantly repeated in the *Mahābhārata* throughout its length as of some authoritative work. It is hence certain that the 'Gītā' does not belong to the *Mahābhārata* of Sauti but it belongs to the 'Bhārata' of Vaiśampāyana. The date of the former is conceded to be about 250 B.C., as shown at length in our "Mahābhārata-mīmāṃsā" (Chapter I); but the date of Vaiśampāyana's 'Bhārata' cannot be indubitably fixed, and hence the date of the 'Gītā' as it is to-day is uncertain.

But there are various arguments which point to 1400 B.C., speaking roughly in centuries, as the probable age of the 'Gītā'. In the first place, the language of the 'Gītā' strikes one as a spoken language and not classical Sanskrit of the time when it was dead and spoken only by Pandits. We know that Buddha preached his new religion to the people in Pali, a Prakrit; and hence it is certain that in his time Sanskrit was dead as a spoken language of the common people. The 'Gītā', therefore, precedes Buddha of 500 B. C. Again, there is no reference to Buddhism in the 'Gītā', though there are many references to the doctrines of Buddhism in the 'Mahābhārata'. Some people think that in Chapter XVI there is a reference to Buddhist tenets in the description of the 'Āsurī' character. But this is a description of the Atheists. For Buddhism is in favour of renunciation and not the enjoyment of the world.

ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान् सुखी ।
आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ॥

—does not depict Buddhist but materialist tendencies. These even perform sacrifices for pomp and show. On the other hand, there is not the least doubt that 'Gītā' is post-Upaniṣadic. The doctrine of renunciation was first preached by the 'Bṛhadāraṇyaka' and it pervades the spirit of all the thirteen old Upaniṣads. It is clear the 'Gītā' is not for renunciation. Indeed, Arjuna is actuated by that spirit when he asks the first and subsequent question in the 'Gītā' and Srī Kṛṣṇa sums His preaching in the pithy verse:—

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥

This is wrongly interpreted by those who believe that the object of the 'Gītā' is to preach 'Saṃnyāsa.' Lokamanya Tilak has pointed out its true import, which is also the natural one. As the 'Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad' must be dated 1900 B. C., roughly, as shown by Tilak from an astronomical statement in it, the 'Gītā' must be placed between 1900 B. C. And 500 B. C. This is a wide range, no

'All can come to Me."

doubt; but it supplies with limits which are certain and unassailable.

There are a few arguments which will give us a more definite approximation to the probable date. It has been rightly shown by some scholars that the *Gītā* is not only pre-Buddhistic but pre-Pāṇinian. Many forms in it are against Pāṇini's rules, such as युध्य, etc. "अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च" again refers to simple grammar, though not to Pāṇini. "चतुर्युगसहस्रान्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः" is quoted in Yāska's *Nirukta,* though in the *Pariśiṣṭa.* More interesting still is "मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहम्", as the month names are modern and not Vedic names, such as Madhu, Mādhava, etc., these new names being introduced about 2000 B. C. according to Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit. But, according to Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa, the first month is Māgha, and hence the *Gītā* seems to be prior to the Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa also, the date of which is about 1190 B. C. even according to the calculation of Archbishop Pratt, who worked the date out for Max Muller. Dikshit takes its date to be about 1400 B. C. It may thus be taken without much difficulty that 1400 B. C. is the probable date of the *Gītā.*

Another sentence furnishes a further argument in favour of this date. It may be accepted that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was already considered a divine being, indeed an incarnation of the Highest Deity at the time of the *Gītā*; but not probably Arjuna. Yet, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: "वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः", he lays the foundation of Arjuna-worship. From Pāṇini's Sūtra "वासुदेवार्जुनाभ्यां कन्", we are sure that during Pāṇini's time both Vāsudeva and Arjuna were worshipped, though Arjuna lost this position later on. *Gītā* is therefore pre-Pāṇinian undoubtedly. If we take the date of Pāṇini to be about 800 B. C., as most Indian scholars do, though European scholars place him about 300 B. C., we may take the *Gītā* to about 1200 B. C. or at least to 1000 B. C. When we further remember that Śrī Kṛṣṇa identifies Himself with Mārgaśīrṣa as being the first of months, as in other things, we can take the *Gītā* still further back, i. e., about 1400 B. C., before the latest possible date for Vedānga Jyotiṣa.

The exact age of the *Gītā* is, no doubt, difficult to be determined for want of detailed knowledge of the political, social and religious history of India before Buddha. The doctrine of *Ahiṃsā* is preached no doubt in the *Gītā.* But it is not the doctrine of Buddha. It had already been preached by the Upaniṣads (अहिंसन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यत्र तीर्थेभ्यः—*Chhāndogya*) and the *Gītā* keeps to it. It prohibits *Hiṃsā* of any kind except for sacrifice. *Hiṃsā* in sacrifice is not *Hiṃsā*, as Hindus then believed and still believe. Buddha prohibits it altogether. Śrī Kṛṣṇa preaches *Ahiṃsā* no doubt, and looks upon it as an essential factor of 'Jñāna' (अहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम्, etc.). But He does not prohibit animal sacrifice, though, like the Upaniṣads, he treats these as of lower merit than *Saṃnyāsa* or *Karmayoga.* Indeed, He even goes beyond the Upaniṣads when He preaches that sacrifices should be performed by every man without any desire for heaven. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes after the Upaniṣads and in a way supports the pre-Upaniṣadic doctrine of sacrifice. The question of *Hiṃsā* or *Ahiṃsā* as it applies to sacrifice is, however, not the question before Him. This religious question is not at the root of the teaching of the *Gītā.* The questoin which was agitating Arjuna was wholly a moral one and related, not to the slaughter of animals in sacrifices to God

but to the slaughter of men in battle, slaughter of even relatives even in a just war. Man has been blood-thirsty throughout history up to the present day, as history is nothing more than the record of wars,—blood-thirsty wars—,of slaughters of human beings committed by conquerors or conquering tribes chiefly for territory and for establishing political power on other human beings. Shall we kill human kith and kin—our relatives, even in a just cause, and hundreds of thousands of human beings who follow them ? This was the question which agitated the mind of Arjuna. Is it not better for ourselves to suffer than to inflict suffering on thousands of human beings, so he thought (श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके). Greek philosophers answered this question in the affirmative and Plato actually held that it is better to suffer ourselves. So did Christ answer. Even after the last European war, which was, so to speak, the Mahābhārata of Europe, the awful carnage of human beings has led philosopher-statesmen to ponder over the question whether war cannot be outlawed. Their phase of mind, however, is not exactly the phase of Arjuna's mind, as he was for suffering himself. The same was not the frame of mind of Aśoka who, after slaughtering hundreds of thousands of human beings in the conquest of Kalinga, came to look upon conquest as a crime and 'Dharmavijaya' as the true conquest; but even he does noot seem to accept suffering and defeat for himself. It seems probable that philosophers in India actually discussed the question whether the awful slaughter of human beings in the great war of the Bharatas was justified, waged as it was for the regaining of a paltry kingdom.

Perhaps the question might have become absorbing during the subsequent centuries due to the recurrence of destructive wars every now and then among the small nations of ancient India. The sentiment of humanity had advanced and the philosophic spirit of resignation, always in the forefront in India, tended to look upon such wars as sinful. The question was only a moral or a political one, no doubt; but in India all questions were only a part of the great question: what is the duty of man in this life both from the worldly point of view and the view of the highest goal of human existence ? It was hence necessary that the question should be discussed fully from these points of view and the *Bhagavad-Gītā* discusses it so thoroughly from all sides and in such a simple yet eloquent manner, in language so deep and meaningful, that the *Gītā* will always remain at the head of religious, philosophical and moral treatises. The answer of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to the vital question which is at the root of the *Gītā* is remarkable. Śri Kṛṣṇa from various points of view impresses upon the mind of Arjuna that it is not proper to turn back from the path of duty, to recoil from the killing of human beings and even of relatives when duty and truth and justice required it. For dying is but the shuffling of mortal bodies. But truth and justice are immortal and must be maintained at every cost. And acts done without selfishness, without greed or attachment, lead to the highest destination—to the final goal "from whence there is no return." This view is impressed upon Arjuna throughout the *Gītā* from various points of philosophical consideration and is summed up at the end in the verse:—

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥

"*With heart unselfish and with mind detached,*
E'en killing the whole world isn't killing sinful."

The Gita Way of Life.

By M. S. Srinivasa Sarma, M. A.

We are to-day in the midst of new circumstances, and our situation is vastly different from that of any other century. The doctrine of relativity, which has startled and shocked the dogmatism of the sciences, has called in question the basic foundations of religious, moral and social activities as well. In this age of growing scepticism and over-developed individualism, which finds a natural ally in the spirit of a moral 'laissez faire', we seem to have lost "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are desperately in quest of harmonised knowledge which would guarantee harmonious life lifting us to serenity and freedom. But fortunately we in this country have in the Message of the *Bhagavadgītā* the great dynamic influence which is potent enough to rescue us from the mental and moral tangle in which we find ourselves to-day. Just as the man who came 'running' to Jesus Christ and asked him, "What shall I 'do' that I may inherit eternal life ?," we are at the present day impatiently in need of guidance and light, and long most urgently for the "drug" that conld cure the diverse ills of life. The *Gītā* is uniquely Ethics, philosophy and religion rolled into one. Its message is simple and universal. It instructs that genuine happiness comes out of realizing one's self. The sacrifice of selfishness is the birth of the true self. It reawakens in men the identity of *Brahma* with Self, and restores to them the lost harmony of reality, so that they conld once more feel life abundantly and feel it whole. Like Christ, the *Gītā* also teaches "Be ye perfect even as you Father in Heaven is perfect." But how is this to be attained ?

With an acute and marvellous psychological analysis the *Gītā* points out that there are three things which are the root cause of all our troubles, and which drag us down to the lowest depths of degradation. The first step in the evolution of spiritual manhood consists in the mastery over lust, hate and greed, which are the triple gate of hell and self-destruction; and the man who is liberated from these three gates of darkness achieves his own welfare and reaches the highest goal.

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥
एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥

(XVI. 21-22)

But in this process of self-culture and self-development there is no vicariousness. Each has to work out his own salvation. Self-realization is a personal achievement. The *Gītā* asks us to raise the Self by the self and not to become depressed; for verily is the Self the friend of the self, and also its enemy. The raising of the self by the Self is by a strenuous process of effortful striving, ceaseless practice of *Dharma,* and intense purification of the self by the joyful discharge of duties in the right spirit, which brings about the spiritual illumination. As Dr. J. S. Mackenzie points out in his Ethics, "there is no stonewall in the way of a man's moral

progress. There is only himself. And he cannot accept himself as a mere fact, but only as a fact ruled by an ideal, which he is bound to aim at realizing and which he *can* realize as soon as he becomes aware of the obligation." Hence the clarion call of the *Gītā:*

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥

The *Gītā* teaches a method which is within the reach of all and which is the secret of the universality of its appeal. It has a message for the comfort and encouragement of all human beings. It is wrong to think that its sole and legitimate function is to quench the speculative thirst of the few. It points out that the only life worth living is a life resplendent with religious vision and moral beauty. Some things in the world are doubtless destined to be enjoyed only by the gifted and the privileged. But there is a good which is as open to the poor, the disappointed and the miserable as it is to the child of genius and the darling of the gods. Only in *certain* circumstances can you be prosperous, happy and famous; but you can *always* be good. Therefore the glory of salvation is achieved through the path of duty. The *Gītā* informs us that duty is concomitant with life. "Our forefathers, seeking liberation, performed the Dhārmic actions; therefore do thou also perform thy right action."

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥

The *Gītā* emphasises that the only corrective to the modern unrest and social waste is to energise the individual by a living ideal, the realization of which would satisfy his inarticulate craving for completeness by liberating the latent forces to be utilised in legitimate channels directed towards bettering the world in every respect. It points out how Janaka and others attained to perfection by the performance of duty, and exhorts us to do likewise having an eye on the welfare of the world at the same time.

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि ॥

Life is activity, and in moral life there is no escape from the reign of duty. Duty is relative to, and dependent upon, the conditions of society. The various duties designed for the different stages and ranks of life are distinct steps in the progressive realization of the Sādhanas of *Nivṛtti* and *Vairāgya,* which are indispensable for the achievement of the final goal of human existence. The doctrine of *Swadharma* is the concrete embodiment of the principle of dynamic relativity characteristic of morality. The beauty and charm of this ideal is that everywhere emphasis is laid exclusively on the discharge of duty and the development of the spirit of service and sacrifice. It disciplines the individual in the due performance of the necessary duties, which are not only essential for his existence but also for the harmonious working of the community of which he is a member. It trains him in the path of *Vairāgya*, which means neither abstinence from action, nor annihilation of human elements, but that unique fr me of mind which is perfectly equipoised and has a clear and comprehensive grasp of human values and validities. It is this spirit of *Vairāgya* which qualifies the individual for spiritual illumination, which is the crown and completion of *Swadharma.* The *Gītā* lets us into the secret and value of duty,

and tells us that man reaches perfection by being intent on his own duty.

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।

The *Gītā* goes further and proclaims that the performance of *Swadharma* is the best form of worship, the most glorious offering to the Almighty (*Archana*). Men attain to perfection by worshipping God by their own duties.

स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ।

The deal of *Swadharma* with the goal of life which it has in view is intended to help forward the highest form of social harmony and the highest moral excellence of the individual. It stands to reason that everyone of us should do only such work as is in accord with his native capacities and hereditary endowments. It is neither practicable nor desirable to attempt to wipe off at one stroke the endowment of the race, the heritage of the past, and the influence of social upbringing. It is on account of this that the doctrine of *Adhikarī* plays such an important part in the Hindu scheme of life. We have to reckon with the Vāsanās and Saṃskāras before we fix the duties and occupations of individuals. The *Gītā* establishes the fact that Karmas have been set apart and prescribed for each stage of life and class of society on the basis of psychological equipment and biological heritage—(कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि). It is because these wholesome prohibitions and salutory injunctions have been ignored and set at nought by us that we find ourselves to-day in the grip of moral and social chaos. The life, dedicated to and energised by the ideal of *Swadharma*, where the individual completely forgets himself in the ever new and changing duties of his station, prevents morbid introspection by draining the native energies into desirable directions, and makes his experience full, rich and complete. The *Gītā* insists that duty ought to be done for its own sake. Its ideal is that the duties will have to be performed in perfect tune with the Infinite, renouncing attachments and evenly balanced in success and failure.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥
(II. 48.)

The *Gītā* clearly points out that the disciplined man, having abandoned the fruits of action, attains to eternal peace; whereas the undisciplined and non-harmonised persons, impelled by desire and attached to fruits, are bound irretrievably.

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥
(V. 12.)

It is sometimes pointed out that the Hindu code of morals is woefully negative in its outlook, inculcating passivity and quiescence and mortification of the human elements. But the fact is that the *Gītā* nowhere teaches us to give up the common business of life; on the other hand, it boldly proclaims that the inner life of spirit is not incompatible with the active life in the world. योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्, *Yoga* is skill in action. The truth is that the *Gītā* asks us to develop the spirit of *Sannyāsa* and *Tyāga*, but has at the same time taken care to define that *Sannyāsa* consists in renouncing all 'interested' works, and *Tyāga* in giving up the fruit of all actions.

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥
(XVIII. 2)

Much unhappiness arises from a wrong valuation of success. What we

have each of us to realise is the scope of our own capacity and to aim at its utilization in the fullest measure. There is no use in eating our hearts out because we cannot be millionaires or ministers. After all it never has been entirely true that the greatest performances of life have been the most important. It is much more necessary that a man should light his own corner than that he should become a minister; that a woman should keep her house clean than that she should become a magistrate. The best way to make things better than they are is to live wholesome lives; and for that we need a constant heroism which is never off duty. At every step work is required—hard, patient, unremitting labour—,and such work is the one real hall-mark of cobility. The real aristocracy of a nation consists of those who, fulfilling however humble a sphere, perform faithfully their special duties, giving unstintingly of themselves in all they do. This is exactly what the *Gītā* teaches us in its concepts of *Swadharma* and *Tyāga*.

The *Gītā* ideal of conduct serves as a great protecting anchor in the welter of conflicting ideas and corroding practices of the present-day world. It declares that the Śāstras should be our authority in determining what ought to be done and what not, and that we ought to work in the world according to the ordinances of the Śāstras. It points out unambiguously that he who has cast aside the Scriptural injunctions and follows the promptings of desire does not attain perfection, nor happiness, nor the highest goal.

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ।।
यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ।।

(XVI. 25, 23)

This indicates clearly that the organisation of Society is in accordance with eternal moral principles. Duty or *Dharma* which *holds* Society together in integrated unity has its source and validity in the Holy Scriptures. The *Gītā* is at the same time fully aware that a society can only pursue its normal course by means of a certain progression of changes; and this is effected by the influence of the personal example of great men well-versed in Śāstras, and the statements of Ṛṣis and Saints, which constitute the authoritative guide and inspiration to point out to us the safe road to all-round progress.

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ।।

(III. 20)

Thus the responsibility of introducing sane and necessary reforms rests on these natural leaders who are the real Āptas. They are the inspired teachers of humanity who through years of self-restraint and self-culture have so purified their intellectual and moral nature as to recognise in their fulness and glory the invisible spiritual realities around. They are the true reformers, since by spiritual intuition they see things *sub specie aeternitatis*. Again, the *Gītā* is conscious of the essentially mobile and progressive nature of society. It knows that change is the primal law of life. The ideal of progressive society and mobile social order is concretely embodied in the conception of *Yoga-kṣema*, which is personally guaranteed by God in the *Gītā*. 'Yoga' is progress, and 'Kṣema' is order. The one connotes steady growth and progressive realization of the goal, and the other signifies the conservation of what has been achieved. Apart from His unambiguous declaration that He is directly responsible for the conservation of values

and the protection of the righteous, Srī Kṛṣṇa definitely assures us that "never doth any who worketh righteousness tread the path of woe".

न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥

The *Gītā* way of life is thus seen to be creative and adventurous. By it we learn that there is a power with whom we can commune and who is the guarantor of our values. It assures us that the light that lights our path is unquenchable, that the moral and spiritual tasks that urge us forward are incomparably worth while, and that the moral struggle must issue in ultimate victory. It completes and fulfils the aspirations of science and art and morality in its portrait of God who combines truth, beauty and goodness in perfect measure, and in so doing it furnishes a ground of validity to these fundamental values. It helps men to view life as a whole, and achieve *Ātmajñāna* or knowledge of Self.

Gita on the Relativity of Ethical Values.

By M. V. V. K. Rangachari.

Moral agency rests upon freedom. An individual or society that has no choice is incapable of action that may be properly named conduct. It is no doubt impossible to remain totally inactive even for a minute.

नहि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥

(*Gita* III. 5)

"None can remain really actionless even for a moment. For, helplessly is everyone driven to action by the qualities of nature."

An act which cannot be helped does not afford a basis for judgment. As with individuals, so with regard to communities and nations, ethical value attaches to such actions only as are the result of free choice. A downtrodden community that reacts to the spur of pricking iniquity has no moral responsibility more than the horse that chafes under an irritating saddle. The kick is but an impulse stimulated by sore skin. It is even a virtual deception to attribute agency for deeds.

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥

(*Gita* III. 27)

"Deeds are the outcome of the qualities of nature. The fool deluded by egoism thinks 'I am the doer'."

The ways of nature are inexorable, human wisdom notwithstanding. It is futile to think of overriding its dictates. How we act, feel and think, is determined by the setting into which we have been carried by the current of evolution.

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥

(*Gita* III. 33)

"Even the wise man behaves in conformity with his own nature; all beings follow their evolution, and restraint avails not."

An effort to stem the tide of natural processes is not merely doomed to failure,

but is often fraught with danger. The path of reform is none too smooth. Very few indeed may detach themselves from their environmental trappings, and overcome the fear involved in breaking away from the familiar ground of *Swadharma.*

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

(*Gita* III. 35)

"One's own natural action, though devoid of merit, is to be preferred to the duty of another well performed. Even death in one's duty is higher. Another's duty is fraught with fear."

This is the confirmation of the path of action relatively to one's own position. Those that would sustain the conservative ground on the basis of pronouncements in the *Gītā* must be prepared when the Song declares that such attachment is itself the outcome of *Moha* or illusion. Elsewhere, in diverse contexts, the discourse turns upon the cutting off of the conventional relationships (*cf.* असङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा—cutting down by the weapon of non-attachment. XV. 3).

The tendency to identify oneself with events is condemned in unmistakable terms, and the spirit of 'Yoga', the capacity to retain the detached view of life, the life of mere *Sākṣī* (disinterested witness) sitting indifferently (उदासीनवदासीनः), is enjoined. It is claimed that such an effort at 'Yoga' will result, even if faintly commenced, in emanicipation from great fear (स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् । II. 40.). In the face of the dynamic activity that the *Gītā* ordains, it would be futile to seek support in its teachings for the reactionary position, which the stabilising sociologists wish to maintain. Those that would chain human action for ever, in the illusory faith that the final word was already said, the final deed was already done, and the final shape was already given to human society, forget the fundamental truth regarding life, viz. the central doctrine of the relativity of human values.

In an article "Coloured Vision" by Prof. H. Levy of the London University (see R. P. A. Annual, 1934, pp 21-26) the tendency to leave out of account the most important element, the creative man, from the consideration of the world's economic, scientific, political, and social problems is brought out. Even while philosophising, man tends to isolate his concepts, as much as the chemist would isolate the phenomena of his experiment in the laboratory. "One of the consequences of the stratification of the society he builds up is to provide the unsuspecting victim who is born in it and bred in these classes with sets of values, dogmas, and interlocking forms of behaviour. While out of these he may erect a set of principles signifying something fixed and permanent to him, for which if necessary he will fight or accept martyrdom, they are effectively rationalisations with a class and individual colouring. Of absolutes there are none in nature, other than the fact of existence of objective nature itself. Our pictures of the world are only approximate, their accuracy being relative to the state of scientific knowledge of the times. Our values again are certainly relative, borrowing the tints from the social strata from which we are drawn, and from those features of the world that have specially stirred us in our encounter with them" (*ibid.* pp. 25). This tendency towards overstressed abstraction is responsible for the confusion at the basis of all calculation. The

reflective account given by Prof. Levy brings to mind the peculiar fallacy attributed to the disciples of a philosopher named Paramanandayya. They were nine in number; but, when the revered Guru (master) wanted each one to count them all, each would give out the number as eight, forgetting himself. It is the fallacy of the forgotten self. "Even Science, that prides itself on the fact that it stands above race, class and creed, is not immune from this relativity of values." It strips all human values from the world, leaving man completely out of its calculations. The industrialist condemns science, that carries on as if he did not exist. It discovers new methods of production, too fast to cope with. The very machinery becomes obsolete during erection. "What has science done for us," chimes in the worker, "except give us rationalisation, and with it unemployment, so that we are robbed of the very fruits it offers us." (*ibid.* p. 26)

While science ignores man and ignores society, philosophy loses itself in the speculation of the problems of the mind separated from matter. The worker and the industrialist change the face of the earth and create forms of society. He who is able to realize the relativity of these values is one who has thrown away the coloured spectacles.

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥

(*Gita* XIII. 11)

"Constancy in the knowledge of the real nature of the Self, the realization of the true essence, that is wisdom. All else is ignorance."

The recognition of the fact that experiments carried on under laboratory conditions convey imperfect truth, that codes of morals formulated under conditions widely differing from our own have to be accepted with caution, that the so-called "permanent and fundamental principles" are "unconsciosly rationalised from the particular society within which we have been cradled," is the true beginning of emancipation through knowledge, the *Mokṣa* attained by *Jñāna*. He who has realized this relativity is the seer, who looks beyond the temporalities of life. Having reached the ideal, no hankering is left in him after fresh pursuits, whatever his mode of life.

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥

(*Gita* XIII. 23)

"He who thus knoweth life, with the limitations inherent in its settings, whatever be his condition, has nothing left to return for."

To be aware of the relativity of values is in itself emancipation from their supremacy. The *Gītā* stands for 'Dvandwa' among the Samāsas, "the duality of a compound" (X. 33). It can bridge the paradox between 'yes' and 'no' with a conjunction. The recognition of the relativity of human values is thus the attainment of absolute truth, the whole truth and nothing but truth. The wise man is not affected by the transformations occurring to individuals and societies in their limited histories. (धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति)—"the steadfast one greiveth not." (II. 13)

Karmayoga in the Bhagavadgita.

By Jayadayal Goyandka.

Is 'Niṣkāma Karmayoga' as preached in the 'Bhagavadgītā' attended with Devotion or is it divorced from it ? If it is accompanied by Devotion, what is its exact nature ?

While cnsidering this question, it appears necessary to devote some thought at the outset to the different forms of action. Actions are of various description and can be mainly divided into three classes, viz., (1) those that are forbidden, (2) those which are prompted by some desire, and (3) those that have been enjoined upon us as obligatory.

Thieving, adultery, doing injury to others, lying, duplicity, chicanery, violence, partaking of forbidden food and idle occupations are what they call forbidden acts (निषिद्ध कर्म).

Actions which are performed with the object of securing a wife, children, riches and so on or getting rid of an ailment or calamity are known as काम्य कर्म (a tions which are prompted by some desire).

Devotion to God, adoration of deities, performing sacrifices, alms-giving, practising austerity, serving one's parents and elders, discharging the obligations attaching to one's caste and order and supplying bodily wants such as hunger, thirst and so on are called obligatory actions (कर्त्तव्य कर्म).

Even actions which are of an obligatory nature can be treated as 'Kāmya Karma' when they are accompanied by some desire. But they also include obligations natural to one's caste and order as well as one's vocational duties. Hence it is all the more incumbent on a man to discharge those duties. It is, on the other hand, optional for every one to perform or not to perform actions of the 'Kāmya' type which have been prescribed in the Sāstras, with some particular end in view.

Of these three varieties of actions those that are forbidden should, of course, be avoided by all. Actions of the 'Kāmya' type, on the other hand, are not at all necessary for those who seek liberation, whereas those of the third class, viz. obligatory actions are both attended with desire and divorced from it according to one's mental outlook. From the moment one desires to engage in an action of 'the Kāmya' type and long after the completion of that work, the mind continues solely to think of the fruit of that action. The mind of one who performs such actions continues at every step to refer to its object, the fruit of that action. If the action is performed with the object of acquiring riches, the man is reminded of it at every moment. Nay, his mind is completely absorbed in the thought of riches. The attainment of his object, viz. the acquisition of wealth fills him with delight, whereas the frustration of his purpose, viz. non-acquisition of wealth or any other impediment in his way afflicts him much. His mind, engrossed as it is with the thought of the fruit of his action, is almost always worried and restless. The mind of such a person, enamoured as it is of worldly objects, can even prompt him sometimes to engage in forbidden acts. Although a man who performs actions in comformity with the injunctions of the Shāstras for the fulfilment of some desire does not want to indulge in forbidden acts, still on account of his craving for worldly objects there is always the risk of his falling down. In case there is some mistake in the performance of an action, the doer, far from attaining his object, has to reap its evil consequences in the shape of some trouble or becomes liable to expiation. The state of mind of one who practises 'Karmayoga' is entirely different from that of an interested agent. His mind is not obsessed by any worldly desire. Whatever he does, he does in a spirit of detachment, relinquishing all desire for its fruit. Here one may ask: 'If he has no desire for fruit, why does he perform any action at all ? The average man cannot perform an action without any motive

and the motive is always supplied by an end. Such being the case, an action cannot be performed without a desire for its fruit. We agree. The average man must have some motive in engaging in activity of any kind; but the motive is of various kinds. An interested agent performs various actions with a view to attaining different ends. Covetousness for some worldly pleasure supplies the motive for his actions. That is why his actions are marked by attachment, his intellect is clouded by ambitions (vide 'Gītā' II. 42-44; IX. 20-21). It is for this very reason that he feels delighted in success and dejected in failure, whereas realization of God is the only motive left for the actions of those who perform them in a disinterested way. * Hence he engages in actions with ever new vigour and zeal. He is free from attachment inasmuch as he has no worldly object in view. He does not feel joy or sorrow when he meets with success or failure, as his ideal has become very lofty. He pays no heed to the outward consequences of his actions. To him all the objects of the world appear much too worthless, foul and trivial as compared with God. In order to realize the noble ambition of attaining God, who is the Greatest of the Great, he brushes aside the biggest objects of the world as of little consequence (vide 'Gītā' II. 49).

That is why he does not feel joy and sorrow in the acquisition and otherwise of worldly objects. There is no possibility of his performing forbidden acts as with an interested agent. Forbidden acts are attributable either to attachment or to avarice. A disinterested agent, however, seeks to remain detached from all worldly objects, giving up all craving for the same. He considers God as the only object worth coveting. His mind clings to Him and Him alone. He, therefore, performs all those actions which are helpful to His realization, with a great zeal. It is an admitted fact that only those actions which have been enjoined upon us by God, which have been prescribed in the Shāstras, and which are in no way prejudicial to anyone, can be helpful in attaining God. Such actions cannot in any case include forbidden acts. Thus a disinterested agent is quite unlike an interested agent.

An interested person regards worldly objects as attractive, gratifying and agreeable, and performs actions out of attachment and with a view to attaining those objects, feeling pleasure in success and sorrow in failure. A disinterested person, on the other hand, looks upon everything as belonging to God, and, keeping his mind equipoised in success and failure and relinquishing attachment and desire for fruit, performs all sorts of actions in obedience to His commands and for His sake alone. This constitutes the difference in the outlook of an interested agent, on the one hand, and a disinterested agent, on the other.

The topic of disinterested action is introduced in the 'Gītā' in verse 39 of Chapter 2. After having discussed 'Sāṃkhyayoga' in verses 11 to 30, the Lord, while inciting Arjuna to behave like a Kṣatriya, proceeds to advise him as follows:—

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

(*Gita* II. 37)

Having expounded to Arjuna (who was in his infatuation afraid of incurring sin) the Sāṃkhya doctrine that by keeping himself equipoised in the various forms of success and failure such as pleasure and pain, triumph and defeat, gain and loss, he would incur no sin, the Lord commences the exposition of 'Karmayoga' in the very next verse which runs as under:—

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥

(*Gita* II. 39)

"So far have I presented to you, O Pārtha (son of Pṛthā) the Sāṃkhya point of view. Now I proceed to lay before you the viewpoint of the Yogīs. Having armed yourself with this attitude of mind, you will be able to shake off completely the shackles of action."

* The desire entertained by a 'Karmayogi' (disinterested agent), namely, that to realize God is not regarded as a desire, leading as it does ultimately to the highest bliss. One who is desirous of attaining God is regarded as a disinterested agent.

In the next verse the Lord goes on to eulogise 'Karmayoga' and observes that a tithe of this discipline averts serious consequences. Later on, in verse 47 He points out that though it is incumbent on us to perform actions we are helpless in regard to its fruit. In verse 48 He says that equanimity (समत्व) consists in maintaining an attitude of indifference in regard to the completion or otherwise of whatever action one performs, and also in regard to its consequences. So saying, He exhorts Arjuna to give up attachment and to perform actions with a mind equipoised in success and failure, and proceeds to tell him that the object to be gained by this behaviour is to get liberated from the shackles of birth (and death) and to attain the highest goal which is free from all sorrow and which is imperishable, viz. God (vide 'Gītā' II. 51).

Thus in verses 47 to 51 of Chapter 2 the Lord has discussed 'Karmayoga'. Although the word 'Bhakti' has nowhere been expressly mentioned in the above dissertation, this should not, however, be taken to mean that this type of 'Karmayoga' is divorced from devotion. Of course, in some places the idea of 'Bhakti' has been clearly and prominently brought out, while in others it has been expressed indirectly and given a secondary place. The existence of God and the noble idea of attaining Him have been referred to in a general way in every exposition of 'Karmayoga'. In fact, the practice of disinterested action begins only when the aspirant seeks to relinquish attachment to fruit, with the auspicious and strong determination to realize God, and gives up all notions of joy and sorrow in the acquisition and otherwise of worldly objects.

Such actions as do not have the pleasure or realization of God as their end do not come under the category of 'Karmayoga'. 'Karmayoga' is accomplished only when the actions are connected with God. Of course, the method of exposition of 'Karmayoga' is twofold in the 'Bhagavadgītā'. In some verses 'Bhakti' is clearly mentioned as a predominant feature, while in others it is not explicitly mentioned.

The passages in which 'Bhakti' has been referred to as a predominant feature are marked by the following expressions:

'Surrendering to Me' (मयि संन्यस्य); 'Depositing with God' (ब्रह्मण्याधाय); 'Discharge your duties (fight) while thinking of Me' (मामनुस्मर युद्ध्य च); 'Dedicate everything to Me' (तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम्); 'Be intent on My service' (मत्कर्मपरमो भव); 'Worshipping Him through one's own actions' (स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य); Performing all actions under My ægis' (कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः); 'Intent on Me'(मत्परः)—vide 'Gītā' III. 30; V. 10; VIII. 7; IX. 27. Where the idea of 'Bhakti' has been expressed indirectly and in a general way, such expressions do not occur (vide 'Gītā' II. 47—51; III. 7,19; IV. 14; VI. 1; XVIII. 6. 9).

From the above it is clear that both the expositions contain a reference to God. And, accordingly, one can attain God even by moulding one's conduct according to the verses in which expressions mentioning the name of the Lord or signifying the idea of भगवत्-शरण (dedication to Him), and भगवदर्थे कर्म (actions having God as their object) have not been used. For, even in such cases the object in view, is nothing else but the realization of God. No doubt the realization of God is quickend by supplementing 'Karmayoga' with such items of devotion as remembering (स्मरण) and reciting the name (कीर्तन) of God. Of all Karmayogīs it is such Yogīs that are regarded as the best.—

The Lord says:—

"Among all Karmayogis he who devoutly betakes himself to Me with the inner self intent on Me, is considered by Me to be the most completely harmonized"

Those who do not in this way combine 'Bhakti' with 'Karmayoga' also attain God, though after a long time (vide 'Gītā' IV. 38; VI. 45). 'Karmayoga' has been preached in the 'Bhagavadgītā' under several names such as समत्वयोग (the Path of Equanimity), बुद्धियोग (the Path of Mental

Equilibrium), कर्मयोग (the Path of Action), तदर्थ कर्म (Action for His sake), मदर्थ कर्म (Action for My sake), मत्कर्म (My Business), मदर्पण (Work dedicated to Me), सात्विक त्याग (relinquishment of a nobler type), etc. Though the goal to be reached by practising all these types of 'Karmayoga' is the same, there is difference in the practice of each. For instance, the difference between मदर्पण and मदर्थ is indicated below:—

मदर्पण and भगवदर्पण mean the same thing; while मदर्थ, तदर्थ and भगवदर्थ are synonymous terms. Of these मदर्पण कर्म can be illustrated by the following example. A man collects money for a particular object and has already got some money with him. He can, however, alter the object of his collecting money whenever he likes and can divert the amount that he has collected to some other use. Thus in मदर्पण कर्म a particular action can be dedicated (to God) at an interim stage or after completion, even though it may have been commenced and continued with a different motive. That prince omong devotees, the celebrated Dhruva, commenced his austerities for the sake of acquiring his father's kingdom. His idea, however, changed in the meantime and his penance was dedicated to the Lord, the result of which was attainment of God. Nay, he was at the same time able to acquire sovereignty according to his previous ambition. But the material gain which fell to his lot did not interfere with his spiritual progress as it does in the case of ordinary people. That was the outcome of his dedicating his action to the Lord. Thus an otion which, though commenced with a different motive, is subsequently or eventually dedicated to the Lord, is treated as an offering to the Lord.

That is not the case with मदर्थ or भगवदर्थ कर्म, which is performed from the very beginning for the sake of the Lord. Just as the work of preparing an oblation for some deity or collecting victulas for feeding the Brahmans proceeds, from the very beginning, with some definite object, similarly, every action of an aspirant who works for the sake of the Lord is commenced with that motive and that motive alone. No doubt, भगवदर्थ कर्म is of various types such as that which is performed with the object of attaining God, that which is done as a behest from God, that which is peformed as His service, and that which is done merely to please Him.

So far we have dealt with the type of 'Karmayoga' in which 'Bhakti' is predominant. Besides these, the verses in which different words such as समत्वयोग, कर्मयोग, सत्विक त्याग, have been used, in fact, denote the same thing. What has been dealt with in verses 47 to 51 of Chapter II. under the name of 'Karmayoga' and so on has been reiterated in verses 6 and 9 of Chapter XVIII under the name of त्याग. As a matter of fact, relinquishment of fruit and attachment is present in both. 'Niṣkāma Karmayoga' has been propounded both with 'Bhakti' and 'Karma' as predominant, which proves that 'Niṣkāma Karmayoga' is that Karma which is performed with the object of attaining God.

It is not necessary for one who practises 'Niṣkāma Karmayoga' to shirk one's obligations and to practise devotion, meditation, etc. in seclusion (with the object of attaining God). Of course, there is no objection if any one does so. It is always highly commendable to remember and fix one's mind upon God. But any one who does not resort to this in seclusion may reach the highest goal by constantly discharging one's duties as laid down in the Shāstras with his mind intent on God, through dedication to Him and through His Grace. The Lord says:—

"Though performing all actions, he attains through My Grace the eternal and indestructible abode, having taken refuge in Me."

"Having mentally dedicated all actions unto Me and intent on Me, resort to 'Karmayoga', which is characterised by equanimity of mind, and always think of Me."

(*Gita* XVIII. 56-57)

As a matter of fact, it is not actions which bind a man; it is desire for fruit and attachment which do so. If the latter are absent, no action whatsoever can bind a man. The Lord has clearly stated that he who leads an active life according to the rules prescribed for his caste attains perfection. Of course, he must have God as his goal while performing the actions.

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥

(*Gita.* XVIII . 46)

"A man attains perfection by worshipping through his actions Him from whom all beings emanate and by whom all this (universe) is pervaded."

Just as a (devoted) wife looks upon her husband as her all-in-all, and duly performs all the household work assigned to her, with her mind, speech and body, as a behest from her husband and for his sake, always thinking of him, and thereby wins his pleasure; in the same way one who practises 'Niṣkāma Karmayoga' regards God as his all-in-all and discharges his duties with mind, speech and body, as a behest from God and for His sake, always thinking of Him, and thereby wins not only His pleasure but Himself besides.

A devotee who follows the path of disinterested action worships the Lord through his actions, regarding Him as pervading the whole creation, animate as well as inanimate, and looking upon everything as God Himself. For winning the pleasure of an emperor it is not essential that every employee of his should perform one and the same kind of work, that every one should work as his premier or commander-in-chief. Every one should endeavour to please His Majesty with the work that has been entrusted to Him according to his own capacity. He should do his job efficiently for the sake of his Master's pleasure, minding not the work allotted to others which may be much superior to his own. A menial servant who sweeps the apartments of the Royal Mansions and gets a very low pay can please his master by his obedience and looking after the tidiness of rooms as much as an erudite scholar attached to the court by reciting the Vedas. No one need abandon the duties that have fallen to one's lot. What is necessary is to dedicate one's actions to God in a disinterested way merely to please Him. This is how we can worship God through our actions and thereby attain Him. The sole goal of a 'Niṣkāma-Karmayogī' is God. Every effort of an avaricious man is directed towards obtaining money; he is always obsessed by the idea of acquiring riches by any means, and is not inclined even to hazard a step which may involve some expenditure to him or which may not fetch him money or may interfere in any way with his income. He undertakes only such actions as are helpful to his acquiring money. Similarly, a Niṣkāmakarmayogī undertakes only such actions all the day long, with his mind, speech and body, as are agreeable to God; he never indulges in forbidden acts such as thieving, adultery, lying, duplicity, taking intoxicating drugs and partaking of prohibited food, and idle occupations which waste his time, all these being a hindrance in the attainment of God. Far from doing such acts, he does not even like such actions. He is always engaged in thinking of, and performing, those actions only which are helpful to the attainment of his ultimate goal, viz. God. He never looks at others' agreeable and honourable occupations with a wistful eye. He continues to perform his duties silently and as a matter of course. He never stops to see whether a particular action is inferior or superior; for he knows that it is not the outward form of an action which is instrumental in leading one to God-realization; it is the attitude of one's mind that is responsible for it. The attitude of one's mind is responsible for one's uplift or downfall. That is why he does not seek in blind imitation of others to undertake a work which is not prescribed for him, however superior it may be. He does not feel that his work is defective in any way or that others' work is altogether free from blemish.

He believes that his own work, though destitute of merits, is better and more commendable than others' work, which may be much superior and endowed with merits. One who performs one's duty does not incur sin (vide 'Gītā' XVIII. 47). People are engaged in the vain pursuit of bringing every one to the same level in society, as they have not grasped the meaning of this Niṣkāma Karmayoga. The Lord has said:-

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥

(*Gita* XVIII. 48)

"One should not abandon one's duty which is congenital, though defective. All undertakings, indeed, are tainted with some blemish, just as fire is clouded by smoke."

The occupation natural to a particular caste in which a man is born constitutes his own duty. The well-organised caste system prevailing in India is the highest conception of this division of labour. Those who seek to abolish this system commit a great blunder. Disparity can never be eliminated in this world. Of course, disruption in society can be easily brought about, which is all the more harmful. A man is, ordinarily speaking, naturally inclined and eager to perform actions which are suited to the class or community in which he is born, the parents whose blood is running through his veins, and the atmosphere in which he is bred from the time of his birth till the time he begins to understand his duties. Hence that leaning or bias is regarded as his habit or predilection. And those actions which are prescribed in the Shāstras and are suited to his nature or temperament have been termed as स्वधर्म (one's own duty), सहजकर्म (congenital duties), स्वकर्म (one's own actions), नियतकर्म (prescribed actions), स्वभावजकर्म (natural duties) and स्वभावनियतकर्म (actions determined by one's temperament), etc. If an aspirant is born in a society well-organised according to the caste system, it is easy for him to know his natural or congenital duty. If not, he should determine his duty according to his temperament on the basis of the above-mentioned factors.

So, a man should perform his duty according to his vocation, without attachment or any selfish motive and in a spirit of service of all, regarding God as pervading the whole world.

For instance, there is a Vaiśya who carries on business transactions, which constitute his duty. But that duty of his can attain the rank of 'Niṣkāma Karmayoga' only when it is performed with the pure motive of serving God and not with any selfish motive. It is not necessary to give up trade and retire to the jungle: what is necessary is to change one's mental outlook, to free it from the tinge of selfishness and desire. As soon as the thought of worldly gain quits our mind, yielding place to God, the actions which have heretofore been a cause of bondage become instrumental in the attainment of God.

Mercury and arsenic can prove nectar-like, if they are refined and purified by an expert physician. The very mercury or arsenic a dose of which can bring about one's death is transformed into ambrosia when its poisonous element has been taken away. Similarly, actions are a source of bondage or death only so long as they are attended with some selfish motive or attachment, As soon as they are purified by being divorced from selfishness and attachment, they become nectar-like and instrumental in enabling a man to attain the immortal seat of God. That is why it is not necessary to relinquish any duty: what is necessary is to purify the mind. A man, for instance, performs sacrifices, gives alms and practises austerities with a selfish motive; whereas another performs the duty attaching to his caste, viz. imparting knowledge, warfare, trade or service, although he does so with the belief that God is present everywhere and with the sacred motive of gratifying and serving others. The latter is superior to the man who merely performs sacrifices, gives alms and practises austerities. For, since he has no desire, he remains equipoised in success

and failure; and, since he is always thinking of God and His behests, avarice and attachment cannot even cross his shadow. Avarice and attachment being absent, there is no possibility of sins or forbidden acts being committed by him.

We do not mean here that one should not perform sacrifices, give alms or practise austerities,or that they are trivial as a means of attaining God. They are always commendable and are very helpful in purifying one's heart and leading to God-realization; but they are so when they are resorted to in a disinterested way. Hence whatever has been written above is merely to indicate the true worth of 'Karmayoga.'

The above dissertation has proved that a Karmayogī is incapable of committing sins knowingly. If, however, a sin is ever committed by him through inadvertence, habit, ignorance or mistake, he is not held guilty for it, inasmuch as there is no selfish motive behind it. Performance of disinterested action cannot bind a man (vide 'Gītā' IV. 14; V. 10). On the other hand, every action of his being dedicated to the Lord, he becomes fully eligible for Divine Grace.

A king has a number of employees. Every one gets his emoluments according to his qualifications, and every one is responsible for some work relating to the King. But every salaried servant is governed by State Rules. If an empolyee violates a rule even through inadvertence or ignorance, he has to undergo punishment according to rules. But one who never and in no way achieves any of his selfish ends through the king or his government and serves the king simply out of disinterested devotion, the king is simply enamoured of his selfless services. If at any time he commits a flaw or error, a good king is not displeased with him. He knows that the man is a selfless servant of the State. If such a servant pleads guilty and courts punishment, the king says, "Well, my friend, we are already indebted to you for your services. What punishment can we mete out to you for your solitary remissness ?" Nay, the king feels indebted to him for his services and seeks to do him good in every way. Similarly, if one who is a selfless servant of God, who dedicates every action to His feet simply for His pleasure, commits an error, God, who is our natural friend, does not at all mind it. This does not, however, constitute a violation of rules; a disinterested servant is governed by such rules.

Thus performing his duty for the sake of attaining God, the aspirant eventually succeeds in his efforts; but even he who has attained God in this way and become liberated during his life-time is capable of performing actions,as long as he lives, for instıucting the world like Janaka (vide 'Gītā' III. 20). Although nothing remains to be done by him (vide 'Gītā' III.17), there is no reason for him either to relinquish actions so long as his mind and senses are alert. One who has attained perfection through "Karmayoga" and become liberated during his life-time is quite unlike ordinary people (vide "Gītā" II. 55-58; XII. 13, 19) .

The actions of such a personage who has attained God are only meant for the guidance of the world, according to verse 25 of chapter III. of "Gītā". And, though actually performed, they are not recognised as actions, devoid as they are of desire and purpose. (vide 'Gītā' IV. 19-20).

Thus one who practises "Karmayoga" dedicated his actions to God for attaining Him and attains Him in the end through His grace. An action which is invariably and indissolubly connected with God can never be divorced from devotion. Hence the "Karmayoga" preached in the "Gītā" is accompanied by devotion, and it consists in performing duties prescribed by the Shāstras with an equipoised mind and simply for the sake of God and as a behest from Him, giving up desire for its fruit and attachment thereto.

Some Aspects of the Teaching of Bhagavadgita.

By M. H. Syed, M. A., Ph. D., D, Litt.

Moral Value of Reincarnation.

When a man dies, death does not put an end to his ever-growing desires for earthly objects and enjoyments. In fact, it is these desires that bring him back to earth. His repeated births are mainly determined by the intensity and duration of his carnal and other type of desires. Ordinarily when a man, not believing in the doctrine of reincarnation, is about to die, he is terribly mortified and utterly miserable, partly because of the pangs of death and separation from his physical tabernacle in which he dwelt for a long time, and partly because the dying person thinks he is torn away *for ever* from the earthly objects of his desire and he is never to come again to taste the fruit of earthly pleasure. Thus he dies full of deep disappointments. But an Indian who firmly believes in the fact of rebirth leaves his body at the time of death with peace and resignation, fully certain that he would come again so long as he desires to enjoy his life on earth. For such an one death loses all its terror and horror. He faces it calmly and quietly.

Whatever he wants he is bound to get in the course of time as he is the Self and shares divine life.

Death is not dreaded by the Hindus. It is a means of liberation. It puts an end to bodily vesture only. The real man is untouched by it.

"As the dweller in the body experienceth in the body childhood, youth, old age, so passeth he on to another body; the steadfast one grieveth not thereat", says Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

(*Bhagavadgītā* II.13)

Real and Unreal.

The fact that the outer world with all its attractions and solid, seeming, multifarious forms is after all changing every moment and is therefore unreal, could hardly be denied or repudiated. It is so patent that it needs no proof. Any one who is accustomed to thoughtful observation and close reflection needs no argument to carry conviction to him in regard to the transitory nature of this world. There is nothing wrong in calling a spade a spade. To state a true fact, however unpalatable, is not to take a gloomy view of life. To think of the unreality of the World is not futile. It has a moral as well as utilitarian value.

It is not unoften that one is confronted with dire misfortune and calamity of various kinds: ill-health, loss, penury, failure and discomfort; naturally one is down-hearted, forlorn and dejected, and finds it hard to bear one's miserable exitsence placidly. But one who habitually dwells on the passing nature of this mundane world does really put on a brave face and meets his ill-luck with equanimity.

Whenever he is in sore need and has nothing to fall back upon, instead of breaking his heart, he takes a wise view of his hard lot and begins to remind himself that neither joy nor sorrow lasts for ever. After all, his dark days are as short-lived and momentary as his prosperous ones.

The idea of the unreality of the World, if constantly borne in mind, helps a person to become desireless and carefree. There is no virtue higher than desirelessness. Desire is the root of sin, which gives rise in its turn to sorrow and suffering. He who has cultivated dispassion is capable of applying himself to any higher pursuit, because a carefree mind alone can accomplish great things in the intellectual, moral and spiritual realm.

He who has convinced himself that everything earthly is subject to change, decay and death does not allow himself to be attached to any earthly pleasure. He knows that it is momentary and is therefore not worthy of his attention. Thus we see that taking this moving world at its right value by no means plunges us into what is called a "dark and dreary view of life", but fills us with hope and cheer and makes us happy and contented.

"The unreal hath no being; the real never ceaseth to be; the truth about both hath been perceived by the seers of the essence of things". (*Bhagavadgītā* II. 16)

Rationale of right activity.

Why is it that so much stress is laid by Śrī Kṛṣṇa upon action? The reason comes out very strongly when we turn to the third chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*, where He speaks so much of action, the chapter called "The Yoga of Action". All depends upon action: "From food creatures become, from rain is the production of food; rain proceedeth from a sacrifice; sacrifice ariseth out of action; know thou that from *Brahma* (*Veda*) action groweth" (III. 14-15). There is the process of life. The whole reproduction of beings, everything that makes a world, depends upon activity; for is it not written that: "For a Sage who is seeking *Yoga*, action is called the means." (*Gītā* VI. 3) "For the same sage, when he is enthroned in *Yoga*, serenity is called the means." We read a little further and we find it said of the serene Sage: "Acting in harmony with Me, let him render all action attractive." (*Gītā* III. 26); so that this teaching of the value of action goes on from step to step. The reason why activity is necessary is given us very fully in this same chapter. For, it is declared: "As the ignorant act from attachment to action, O Bhārata, so should the wise act without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world. Let no wise man unsettle the mind of ignorant people attached to action."

Social Service.

It is said that the Hindus are selfish; they care only for their individual well-being and liberation, and not for the welfare of their fellow-men, and the amelioration of their social, political and moral condition. Nothing could be farther from the truth than this unauthorised statement. Practically all the schools of Indian Philosophy believe in the common unity and the divinity of the Self. They are repeatedly enjoined by all the spiritual teachers to love their neighbours and every creature (सर्वभूतानि) as much as their own selves, because they share one life. They are mutually

dependent upon each other. As an injury done to one part of a body is felt by the whole body, so the loss or injury done to one man is felt by the others. Another reason for working unselfishly and disinterestedly for others is this:

A man cannot be perfect without outgrowing his egoism and selfishness. One of the recognised methods of overcoming selfish tendencies is service.

Every human being owes some debts to society. He contracts debts in relations to his family, nation and country. His growth and progress are, to a great extent, due to the help and guidance he has been receiving from his fellow-men. Unless and until he pays back all his dues to the uttermost farthing, he cannot win his freedom from the round of birth and death. No liberation, which is the goal of the effort of every Hindu, is possible without paying his Karmic debts, which in its turn demands constant activity.

Besides, one of the paths of union to God is *Karmayoga*—Union with God through action. If an active and energetic man of the world desires to tread the path of spiritual perfection, he is not expected to renounce the world and cease from active life as is wrongly supposed by some people who do not understand clearly the Hindu View of life as inculcated in the *Gītā*.

Without learning to live in the lives of others one cannot proceed on this path of spiritual realization.

One life.

All who are sharers of one life must inevitably, as parts of the whole, find their natural development and their happiness in harmony with the life of which they are parts. Disharmony is always productive of suffering. Only in harmony can peace and happiness be found; and the very moment we realize that there is but one life, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: "I pervade this universe with one fragment of Myself and I remain"—the moment we realize that, we are bound logically also to realize that the part can only find its perfection and its happiness by harmony with the whole to which it belongs. Over and over again we see it pointed out that only by harmony with the world around us is it possible for humanity to advance, and to find peace and happiness.

Sinner's Fate.

It is often alleged that the Hindu religion and philosophy hold out no hope or prospect of redemption for sinners. It does not grant any forgiveness of sin. Thus the outlook for his future well-being in the life beyond is rather gloomy and cheerless. A closer and deeper study of the fundamental principle of Indian philosophy reveals that, although there is no room for grace or forgiveness of sin in the teachings of higher Hinduism, yet they fill the heart of a sinner with dignified hope and confidence in the amelioration of his undesirable condition and attainment of perfectly moral life in the course of time.

Whatever may be the cause of his sins, they could be exhausted and put an end to by suffering. Having suffered once and having paid all his Karmic debts in the form of sorrow and sufferings of every description here and hereafter, he becomes as pure as snow. He suffers because he sins, but deliverance from

evil tendencies and vicious propensities *is entirely in his own hands.*

However degraded and fallen a man may be, the moment he is awakened to his higher nature, the blissful Self, and learns to identify himself with It rather than with the form, he feels himself a better man and all his evil actions are burnt in the fire of wisdom.

"Even if thou art the most sinful of all sinners, yet shalt thou cross over all sin by the raft of wisdom." (*Gītā.* IV. 36)*

The Perfect Yogi.

The self, harmonised by *Yoga*, seeth the SELF abiding in all beings, all beings in the SELF; everywhere he seeth the same.

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me, of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

He who, established in unity, worshippeth Me, abiding in all beings, that *Yogī* liveth in Me, whatever his mode of living.

He who, through the likeness of the SELF (the same SELF shining in the heart of each), O Arjuna, seeth equality in everything, whether pleasant or painful, he is considered a perfect *Yogī.*

(*Gītā VI. 29-32*)

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* We also beg to invite the attention of the readers in this connection to the following verses of *Srimad Bhagavadgita,* which show that even the worst sinner can attain God by resigning himself to His will, in which case God Himself takes the responsibility of purging him of all his sins and thus making him fit for His realization. All that is needed is that the devotee should abstain from sins in future; for, so long as he continues to lead a sinful life, he cannot be said to have resigned himself to the Divine Will. The *Gita* says:—

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् । साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥
क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति । कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥

(IX. 30-31.)

"Even if the most depraved sinner betakes himselp to Me with exclusive devotion, he too must be accounted virtuous, for he hath rightly resolved. *Speedily he turns out to be a saint* and goeth to eternal peace. O Kaunteya, know thou for certain that My devotee never perisheth."

The Lord further says:—

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज । अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

(XVIII. 66)

"Abandoning all dependence on virtues and duties, come unto Me alone for shelter; sorrow not, I will *absolve thee from all sins.*"

How reassuring and encouraging the words are! Thus the *Gita* holds out the highest assurance of speedy redemption foreven the worst sinner who betakes himself to God in all earnest, withdrawing his mind from everything else.--Editor.

Fourteen kinds of Sacrifices enumerated in the Gita.

Class of Sacrifice.	Subdi-visions.	Name of sacrifice.	Chapter and verse.	Explanation.
1, Sacrifices performed with material substances	2	1. द्रव्ययज्ञ (offering money and other necessaries of life).	IV. 28	Offering money, food-stuffs, clothing etc. for charity, religious endowments and works of public utility.
		2. देवयज्ञ (Sacrifices intended for gods).	IV. 25	Offering oblations of Ghee and other substances to fire for the sake of gods (celestial beings).
2.Bodily sacrifices.	2	1. ज्ञानेन्द्रिययज्ञ(control of senses of perception).	IV. 26	Practising control of senses of perception, that is to say, withdrawing them from their objects.
		2. विषययज्ञ (enjoying objects with certain restrictions).	IV. 26	Enjoying with the senses the remains of sacrifice only.
3.Sacrifices performed with the tongue.	1	स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञ	IV. 28	Studying scriptural texts such as the Vedas, etc. reciting Stotras (panegyrics addressed to deities) and muttering the scared names of God (नामजप)
4-Sacrifices relating to control of breath.	4	1. प्राणयज्ञ (Sacrifice relating to the Prāna wind).	IV. 29	Offering the Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna winds to the Prāṇa wind, that is to say, practising the Prāṇāyāma known as Pūraka.
		2. अपानयज्ञ (Sacrifice relating to the Apāna wind).	IV. 29	Offering the Prāṇa, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna winds to the 'Apāna' wind or practising the Prāṇāyāma known as Rechaka.
		3. प्राणापानयज्ञ	IV. 29	Making the Prāna wind steady, smooth and calm in the body after it has been purged of all its impurities, and practising the Prāṇāyāma known as Kumbhaka (internal or external).

Class of Sacrifice.	Subdi-visions.	Name of sacrifice	Chapter and verse	Explanation.
		4. अन्तःप्राण यज्ञ	IV. 30	Controlling the vital energy which infuses activity into the senses by practising moderation in diet.
5. Sacrifices performed with the intellect (Buddhi).	1	योगयज्ञ (Sacrifice by way of Yoga).	IV. 28	Performing actions in a disinterested spirit with efficiency, or practising the eightfold Yoga (अष्टाङ्गयोग).
6. Sacrifices of a miscellaneous type.	3	1. तपोयज्ञ (Sacrifice by way of austerity).	IV. 28	Observing vows and fasts, or cleansing and purifying the body as well as the mind by observing hard rules such as that of non-injury to others (अहिंसा) or practising austerity in the shape of discharging one's religious commitments.
		2. जपयज्ञ (Sacrifice by way of Japa).	X. 25	Muttering a particular name or Mantra (incantation) either aloud or in a low whisper or even mentally, or meditating on its syllables or fixing the mind exclusively on it.
		3. इन्द्रियप्राणकर्मयज्ञ	IV. 27	Stopping the activities of the senses and the functioning of the vital airs, and focussing the mind on the Self, or devoting the activities of the senses and the functioning of the mind to 'Yoga' in the shape of steadfastness in God illumined by wisdom.
7-Sacrifices relating to God.	1	ज्ञानयज्ञ (Sacrifice by way of wisdom).	IV. 25	Knowing everything to be Brahma and realizing its presence in every activity in every way at every time and everywhere.
		or		
		ब्रह्मयज्ञ (Sacrifice by way of absorption in Brahma.	IV. 24	

The theories of Illusion and Evolution in the Gita.

There are passages in the *Gītā* to support both the theories, and therefore it cannot definitely be said whether the *Gītā* confirms the one or the other view. In our opinion the *Gītā* has nothing to do with any of the theories; for it aims at union with the eternal Existence, which is all-knowledge and all-bliss, the Omnipotent Supreme Being, and shows various ways to attain to It, which include, by the way, both the above views as well. Thus we have:—

अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥
भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥

(*Gita.* VIII. 18-19)

"From the Unmanifest (subtle body of *Brahma*) all the manifested stream forth at the coming of the day; at the coming of night they dissolve, even in that called the Unmanifest." Even Brahmā along with his abode disappears after completing a hundred years of his existence.

"This multitude of beings, thus coming into the becoming again and again, dissolves itself at the coming of night; by ordination, O Pārtha, it streams forth again at the coming of day."

From these verses it is clear that all manifest material forms evolve out of the unmanifested cosmic form and in the end dissolve in it. Here it is not said that they 'seem' to evolve and dissolve and do not actually do so. On the contrary, it is clearly stated that the unmanifested manifests itself and the manifest again becomes unmanifest. The subtle cosmic body comprising all these unmanifested elements, itself dissolves into the Primordial Unmanifested Nature at the end of the Great Dissolution (महाप्रलय), and then comes out of it again. It is this Primordial Unmanifest Nature that has been termed 'महद्ब्रह्म' in verses 3 and 4 of Chapter XIV. This *Mahad Brahma* is said to be the original source of all manifestations at the beginning of the great cycle of manifestation. All this expansion of matter is due to this original power. In verses 19 and 12 of Chapter XIII also the Twenty-three elements which are effects and causes both are said to be the expansion of Nature.* This, in

* Ether, air, fire, water and earth in their primary subtle forms, and the five objects, *i. e.*, word, touch, form, taste and scent—these ten are called the effects. The discriminative faculty, the ego, the mind, the five senses of perception and the five organs of action, all numbering thirteen, are called the instruments. The third verse of the *Samkhya-Karika* tells us that out of the 25 elements recognized in the Samkhya System, viz., *Purusha* (Spirit), *Prakriti* (Primordial Matter) *Mahat* (Intelligence), *Ahankara.* (Ego), the five Tanmatras (subtle elements), *Manas* (mind), the five organs of sense-perception and five more of action, and the five gross elements, viz., ether, air, fire, water and earth, *Prakriti* is the cause and not an effect, the next seven, beginning with *Mahat,* are both causes and effects. The next sixteen are effects only and the *Purusha* (Spirit) is neither a cause nor an effect.

मूलप्रकृतिरविकृतिर्महदाद्याः प्रकृतिविकृतयः सप्त ।
षोडषकस्तु विकारो न प्रकृतिर्न विकृतिः पुरुषः ।

The Unmanifested *Maya* is known as Primordial Matter. Being uncaused it is said to be the original cause and not the effect of any cause. *Mahat, Ahankara* and the five Tanmatras or essential conditions of the five elements are both causes and effects. The organs of sense-perception and action, the mind and the five elements, numbering sixteen in all, are effects only, being the effects of the seven last enumerated. They are not causes for they do not evolve further. According to the Samkhya view, the order of manifestation or unfolding of

short, means that all that we see and perceive is an effect of Nature. Nature itself has evolved into this state. The four types of organic bodies that are born with the individual soul are begotten of a union of Matter and Spirit. The physical forms of all such embodied souls are products of Nature, while the consciousness manifesting therein is a portion of the Supreme Being. The seed of consciousness is laid by the Lord, the Father of all.

The Lord says:—

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः ।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥

(*Gita* XIV. 4)

"O son of Kuntī, of all these forms that are born in various wombs, the mother is the *Māyā* consisting of the three Guṇas, who holds them in her womb, and I the father who lays the seed." Thus, in the *Gītā* we find at various places the Spirit with Nature being mentioned as responsible for the birth of all creatures. Somewhere it is said that under the supervision of the Lord the Nature brings forth the various creatures (IX.10), whereas at other places it is mentioned that 'I' (God Himself) bring them forth (IX. 8). Both these utterances embody the same truth.

All that has been said up till now clearly proves that all this movable and immovable existence is an evolute of Nature. The Supreme Being is not an evolving Principle. He is beyond the qualities of Nature. In this process of evolution of matter the Supreme Being is the inspirer, the helper and is not affected thereby in any way. It is said in verse 20 of Chapter VIII that "beyond the unmanifested Nature there is the eternal unmanifest Supreme Being, who is immutable and unaffected, ever the same as before." Therefore the *Gītā* says that he alone knows aright who knows that God is imperishable and always the same even after all other existences have been wiped out.

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥

(*Gita* XIII. 22)

"The Supreme Lord dwells equally in all existences as imperishable among things that perish. Only he sees who sees Him."

The Supreme Being undergoes no change. He is eternally pure and conscious. It is this transient world which changes. The *Gītā* supports this theory of evolution.

On the other hand, there are many passages in the *Gītā* on the authority of which the commentators of the *Adwaita* (Monistic) school of thought establish their *Māyāvāda*, the theory of Illusion. The Lord has said, "Look at the wonder of My *Yogamāyā* which makes this non-existing world look as having evolved out of Me (न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् । IX. 5), *i. e.*, in reality the world does not exist in Me. But it looks as if it is, and therefore it is. Thus, all this is the play of My power of Illusion (माया). Just as one may see a non-existing serpent in a bit of rope, likewise, this world, though unreal (non-existing), appears as real through our ignorance. The Lord further says: "Just as the ether-born air, which moves everywhere, is always there in the ether, know thou that all these existences born of My

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Nature is as follows: *Mahat* evolves from the Primordial Nature, from *Mahat* the Ego, from the Ego the five essences and the eleven senses including the mind, and from these fine essences the fine elements. The order is the same as in the 5th verse of Chapter XIII of the *Gīta*.

Will are likewise in Me." But this does not mean that, like the ether-born air moving always in ether, this world exists in the Supreme Being. The analogy is intended only to give an indication of the matter. In the seventh chapter the Lord has said, "The Sāttvic, the Rājasic and the Tāmasic ideas and impulses do come from Me; but in reality I in them and they in Me are not" (न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि । VII. 12).

"There is nothing other than Myself" (मत्तः परतरं नान्यत् किञ्चिदस्ति धनंजय । VII. 7); "All is Vāsudeva and nothing else" (वासुदेवः सर्वमिति; VII. 19); "As this world has been described, it is not realized here (on careful thought)" (न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते XV. 3); these and other such passages lend very strong support to the theory of Illusion, and it seems that there is nothing save the One Supreme Being. All that appears is a phantom (माया).

Thus we have passages in the *Gītā* to support both the theories. But, to our mind, the *Gītā* does not propound any one-sided theory; it is not meant for that purpose. On the contrary, it synthesises all the different theories and shows various ways to the attainment of the Supreme. Men inclined towards either view may get a sufficient support from the *Gītā* and therefore the *Gītā* is for all. Each one according to his view and capacity may follow the *Gītā* and set out on the path to the Divine.

(*Kalyan*)

Action, Wrong Action and Inaction according to Gita.

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥

(*Gita* IV. 17)

"It is necessary to understand about action as well as to understand about wrong action, and about inaction also it is necessary to understand; mysterious is the path of action."

The path of action is really too intricate to be easily seen through; it is therefore that the Lord lays a great emphasis on the necessity of knowing the truth about it and also explains the thing. *Karma* or action has been classified under three heads: action (कर्म), wrong action (विकर्म) and inaction (अकर्म). It is very difficult to ascertain what the Lord actually meant by these terms, yet whatever strikes us on a careful study is being presented to the readers. Generally it is held by the learned that कर्म means right action, which results in happiness here or hereafter, विकर्म or wrong action is that which results in suffering here or in the next world, while अकर्म (inaction) is that action or renunciation of action which does not produce any reaction. It is becoming further difficult for us to understand the real significance of these three because we are in the habit of calling all that we do with our mind, speech or body as *Karma*. But really it is not so. Had it been so, there was nothing mysterious about it to baffle the intellect of ordinary men. The Lord would not have mystified us in that case by saying that even the most intelligent are perplexed as to what is action and what inaction (किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः। *Gītā*. IV. 16).

Nor could He have called the subject of action as something very intricate. This proves that the outward action of mind, speech or body or their ceasing to function does not constitute action or wrong action or inaction. It solely depends on the motive of the doer whether an action is to be classed as action, wrong action or inaction. Ordinarily the following distinction should be borne in mind in this connection.

Action.

Only right actions performed with the mind, body, or speech, in conformity with the scriptural ordinance, are generally recognized as coming under the category of *Karma.* But even such actions may eventually turn out to be wrong actions or even inaction according to the motive of the doer; for the motive is the main test here.

(1). A right action done in the right way, as enjoined by the Sāstras, with the best of motives and with a desire for some return, is what is called action.

(2). Even an action coming under the category of duty, such as sacrifice, austerity, almsgiving or service, which is done with the worst of motives, turns out to be wrong action, characterised as it is by a predominance of *Tamas* (ignorance and darkness). For instance, the *Gītā* says:—

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः ।
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥

(XVII. 19,)

"Austerity which is practised under a deluded understanding or by sheer bravado, with self-mortification or with the object of harming another is characterised as partaking of *Tamas.*"

(3) 1. Action performed as one's duty without any desire for return, and consecrated to the Divine (*Gītā* IX. 27, 28 XII. 10, 11) or done from the very beginning for God's sake does not result in anything other than liberation, and is therefore called inaction.

2. Action done without any ego-sense and with the mind inseparably united with God is also not productive of any other result than liberation and is therefore inaction. (*Gītā* III. 28; V. 8, 9; XIV. 19).

Wrong Action.

Ordinarily only prohibited actions, proceeding from the mind, speech or body, such as doing injury to others, telling lies and thieving, etc., are recognised as wrong actions; but they, too, eventually turn out to be actions or inaction also according to the motive of the doer; for motive is the main test here as well.

(1) Even such actions as killing or injuring others, done with the best of motives, though with a desire for happiness in this or the other world, (even though appearing to be wrong actions) are regarded as *Karma* (*Gītā* II.37).

(2) Wrong actions done with a bad motive are, of course, 'wrong'.

(3) Actions such as killing or doing injury to others, done with the best of motives and by way of duty, without any ego-sense or attachment, (though appearing to be wrong) are not produc-

tive of any result and are therefore regarded as inaction (*Gītā*. II. 38; XVIII. 17).

Inaction.

Inaction does not merely consist in the absence of all action proceeding from the mind, speech or body. Renunciation of action, though appearing as inaction, can take the form of action or wrong action as well according to the motive of the renouncer, motive being the chief determining factor here also.

(1) An aspirant who, having renounced all activities of mind, speech and body, dwells in solitude and thinks that he has renounced all action, is credited with the action of renunciation even though he appears to do nothing, because he recognises himself to be the renouncer. Such inaction is accounted as action.

(2) In times of difficulty and crisis, when a man out of fear or selfishness shirks his duty and refuses to perform even such actions as are enjoined upon him, puts up a show of renunciation with the motive of cheating others, the apparent inaction in all these cases is not inaction, but, being productive of evil consequences, is considered to be wrong and sinful.

(3) Absence of all action at the time of *Samādhi* (absolute absorption) on the part of one who is unified with God and has his ego-sense merged in Him, is real inaction. (*Gītā* II. 55, 58; VI. 19, 25)

Thus action, wrong action and inaction cannot be determined only by activity or inactivity; it is the motive alone which makes them what they are. Even an action can be turned into inaction and *vice versa* by the motive of the doer or renouncer of actions. He alone who knows this secret intimately and rightly is, according to the *Gītā*, the most intelligent man, a perfect *Yogī* and a doer of all actions (स बुद्धिमान् मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्. IV. 18), and is delivered of all evil and grief in the shape of transmigration (यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात्. IV. 16).

(*Kalyan*)

The value of remembering God.

And he who, casting off the body, goeth forth thinking upon Me only at the time of death, he entereth into My being: there is no doubt about that.

Whosoever at the end abandoneth the body, thinking upon any being, to that being only he goeth, O Kaunteya, ever to that conformed in nature.

Therefore at all times think upon Me only and fight. With mind (*Manas*) and Reason (*Buddhi*) set on Me, without doubt thou shalt come to Me.

(*Gītā VIII. 5-6-7*)

Questions and Answers about the Gita.

A certain gentleman has asked the following questions:—

(1) Does the Gītā believe in the Vedas ? If so, how ? Why have the Vedas been spoken of in disparaging terms in verses 42, 45, 46 and 53 of Chapter II ?

(2) Does the Gītā believe in the institutions of Varṇa and Aśrama ? If so, in what way ? If not, why is it inclined towards the same ? If, on the contrary, it reposes faith in them, what does verse 66 of Chapter XVIII mean ?

(3) What does the Gītā believe in—Action or Knowledge or both ? If it believes in Action only, Knowledge is futile; or, if it believes in Knowledge, then Action is fruitless. If it believes in knowledge, why does it prefer action ?

(4) Does the Gītā support Idol-worship ? If not, what does verse 26 of Chapter IX mean ? If it does, does it recognize God to be manifest or unmanifest ?

(5) The Gītā says that no knowledge should be imparted to one without first initiating him into discipleship. If so, was Arjuna a disciple ? Did he attain knowledge through instruction ? Did he attain to the Supreme status ?

(6) Did the Gītā flow from the lips of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself, or someone else is the author thereof.

ANSWERS:

(1) The Gītā believes in the Vedas and gives them a very high place in its estimation. The verses of the second chapter referred to above do not denounce the Vedas. It is simply stated that one should not indulge in actions of an interested nature, bestowing worldly enjoyment and power or enjoyments of the higher worlds which are only transitory and perishable, and that one should devote himself to the Higher Self. Man is naturally drawn towards the enjoyment of sense-objects and, if with this weakness in him he happens to hear such tempting utterances as 'by doing a particular thing one would get immense wealth' or 'by a particular ritual one would get a wife and children to his liking', or 'by a certain sacrifice one would reach the higher world of happiness (स्वर्ग)', his mind is sure to be led away. His desire for enjoyment increases and unsettles his discriminative mind. One cannot understand the truth by a 'many-branched' intellect and, unless this is done, one cannot be rid of miseries for all time to come. It is therefore that the Gītā repeats the same thing in the ninth chapter:—

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा
यज्ञैरिष्टा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-
मश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥
ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं
क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना
गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥

(20-21)

"The performers of rituals of the triple Vedic dispensation with a desire for their fruits, the drinkers of Soma (the beverage of gods), the purified from the sin, worshipping Me with sacrifices, pray of Me the attainment to heaven and, attaining as a reward of their meritorious deeds to the abode of the Ruler of the Shining ones, eat in heaven the divine feasts of gods, and, having enjoyed the spacious heaven-world, the store of their merit exhausted, come back to this mortal world. In this way, those who are desirous of worldly enjoyments, having recourse to the rituals enjoined by the three Vedas and prompted by self-interest, are repeatedly born in this world."

In short, those who are engaged in actions prompted by desire, have to come

in and go out of this world over and over again; for rebirth is their only reward. They cannot get out of the cycle of birth and death. From the above exposition we want to make it clear that all that has been said in the verse quoted above is not a denunciation of the Vedas, but of desireful works; for works done with a desire are not conducive to the highest Bliss, and belong therefore to a lower grade than that of desireless action and desireless devotion. The Vedic rituals are not in themselves bad. The performers of those rituals even with a desire are not, like men of a demoniac disposition, मोहजालसमावृताः, 'enmeshed in the web of Delusion' and doomed to perdition (पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ) or cast into demoniac wombs and deluded birth after birth, far from Me, sinking into the lowest depths:—

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥

(*Gita* XVI. 20)

It is said of them, on the contrary, that they, purified from all sin (free from the sin of not having fulfilled their obligations towards gods), and worshipping the Divine by means of sacrifices with a desire of that higher world of happiness, attain to Heavenly bliss and partake of the manifold celestial enjoyments.

On the other hand, there are many passages in the Gītā which indicate the importance of the Vedas:—'कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।' ("Know that action has its origin in the Vedas and the Vedas have emanated from the Immutable Supreme Being." III. 15).

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥

(XVII. 23)

"Om, Tat and Sat: this has been considered to be the threefold designation of Brahma' and in the beginning of Creation the Brahmans, the Vedas and the Sacrifices were created by that." It is shown in these passages that the Vedas have emanated from the Supreme Being Himself.

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान् सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥

(IV. 32)

"Many such sacrifices are spread out in the mouth of the Vedas. Know them all as born of the action of body, mind and senses. Thus by knowing the truth, thou shalt be freed from the bond of mortality by the 'path of desireless action'", Here the truth of it has been pointed out that one can attain liberation by performing the Vedic rituals in a disinterested way, after knowing their true value. 'यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति'—"To which the knowers of the Veda give the name of Akṣara, OM (VIII. 11)". This is clearly in praise of the Vedas. We find almost the same words in the following Mantra of the Kaṭhopaniṣad:—

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत्

(II. 15)

"That which all the Vedas treat of and austerities proclaim, and to attain which they take a vow of continence, of that status I speak to thee in brief: That is OM."

......पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ।

(*Gita* IX. 17)

"I am the sacred OM as well as Ṛk, and Sāma and Yaju (the three Vedas).

The author of the Gītā, the Lord Himself, has thus recognized the Vedas as His own being. In verse 4 of Chapter XIII, the Lord, while explaining the truth of the Field and the Field-knower (क्षेत्र and क्षेत्रज्ञ) with their distinctive properties, as declared in the various Mantras of the Veda ('छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक्'), supports His utterances by bringing in the authority of the Vedas, when he says:—

वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥

(XV. 15)

"And that which is worth knowing in all the Vedas am I; and I, indeed, the author of the Vedānta and the knower of the Vedas.". In this passage, the Lord, by declaring Himself to be knowable by, and the knower of, the Vedas, has acknowledged in clear terms the highest importance of the Vedas. There are, besides, other places where the Vedas have been extolled.

It must be clear now that the Gītā does not underrate the Vedas. It has simply placed desireful action lower than desireless action. In fact, the enjoyments of this and the other world are decidedly lower than the highest bliss of liberation. The Vedas themselves propound the same truth. The fortieth chapter of Yajurveda has established this. In the dialogue between Yama and Nachiketā in the Kaṭhopaniṣad, we find Yama denouncing worldly enjoyments and power and extolling the bliss of liberation, and congratulating Nachiketā on his having renounced all attachment to worldly power and pelf. (Kaṭha II. 1, 2, 3). This is exactly what the Gītā says. By eulogising desireless action and desireless devotion, and emphasising the importance of the Self, the Gītā has indirectly only confirmed the Vedas.

(2) The Gītā believes in the institutions of Varṇa (caste) and Aśrama (the four stages of life). If the four grades of society—the Brahmans, the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Sūdras devote themselves to a desireless performance of their duties naturally imposed on them by their birth, with a view to pleasing the Lord thereby, their liberation, the Gītā says, is assured. The natural duties of these four orders have been enumerated in verses 42 to 44 of Chapter XVIII, and then in verses 45 and 46 it is pointed out that in the faithful discharge of their duties lies their salvation, their highest bliss. Again, in verses 47 and 48, perfect devotion to one's own natural calling has been particularly inculcated.

The Gītā believes in caste both by birth and action. 'चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।' (IV. 13)—"By differentiation of qualities and actions have I created the four orders." It is quite clear from the above that the four orders have been created according to their respective qualities and work as determined by the past actions of the individuals oomprising these classes and not by individual choice. That is why the Gītā calls the duties attaching to one's caste as actions born of one's स्वभाव or innate tendency and सहज (accruing from birth itself). Any one who takes refuge in the Lord and offers Him worship by his own natural calling in a desireless spirit of devotion attains to salvation. The duties accord with the castes; but, as to the right of obtaining salvation, there is an equal opportunity for all. The Gītā proclaims:—

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥

(XVIII. 46)

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥
किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥

(IX. 32-33)

"Man acquires spiritual perfection by worshipping in his own natural work the Lord from whom all existences emanate and who pervades them all."

"O Arjuna, womanfolk, the Vaiśyas, the Sūdras and even those of sinful birth, by taking refuge in Me, acquire spiritual perfection".

"How much more, then, are the holy Brahmans and devoted royal saints fitted for the attainment of the same ? Therefore, having got this painful and transient human life, devote thyself to Me."

In verse 66 of Chapter XVIII, the phrase 'सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य' does not mean the relinquishment of all Dharmas bodily. For, in verses 23 and 24 of chapter XVI, it has been definitely stated that by relinquishing the duties enjoined by the Sāstras, no perfection or happiness or highest state of bliss can be attained, and insistence has been made on the due performance of such duties. Verses 47 and 48 of chapter XVIII also

lay a great emphasis on the dicharge of one's legitimate duties. To say like that in one place and to dispense with all Dharmas in another is a self-contradiction, which is not possible. Even supposing for a moment that the Lord has contradicted Himself and has really asked Arjuna to abandon all Dharmas, we shall have to face another difficulty, namely, that Arjuna says in verse 73: I shall do what Thou biddest me to do" (करिष्ये वचनं तव), and then engages in battle, which was the duty devolving upon him by virtue of his being a Kṣatriya by caste. This action of his was in direct contradiction to his statement inasmuch as the Lord had asked him to abandon all Dharmas. How is this antinomy to be solved ? There is no other solution than an admission of the fact that the Lord has not bidden him to abandon all Dharmas. The words सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य only mean that one should relinquish all dependence on Dharmas, and take refuge in God alone. One is not called upon to relinquish the various Dharmas bodily. What is required is the relinquishment of dependence thereon. So far about the institution of caste. To the Aśrama-dharma, Gītā makes no direct reference. 'ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति', 'यततो वीतरागाः' (VIII. 11) and 'तपस्विभ्यः' (VI. 46)—these and other expressions of like significance refer indirectly to the orders of Brahmacharya, Sannyāsa and Vānaprastha respectively. About Gṛhastha (the household life), of course, there are clear references in the Gītā.

(3) Gītā recognizes the Yoga of Knowledge and the Yoga of Action as two independent ways of salvation for the seekers according to their capacities. Both the ways lead to one and the same end—the attainment of the Divine—, but their methods of work, their attitudes of mind and their outlook are altogether different. One cannot follow both the paths simultaneously.

A desireless Yogī treading the path of action regards the action, the fruit of action, the Supreme Being and himself as quite different from one another and, abandoning the fruit of action and attachment thereto, devotes himself solely to God and offers all his actions to Him; while the Yogī on the path of knowledge regards all things and happenings as a transaction between the qualities of nature and, thus freed from all egoistic assumption, is seated always unified with the all-pervading Supreme.

Now renunciation of action bodily is not essential in either of the two ways, whereas devotion is indispensable to both.

(4) The Gītā does support Idol-worship, as is proved by verses 26 and 34 of Chapter IX. The Gītā teaches us to see God in both the Manifest and the Unmanifest aspects. Thus we have in verses 6 to 9 of Chapter IV:

"Although I am imperishable and unborn and the Lord of all existences, I put on form and appear by My Yogamāyā, assuming control over My nature. O Bhārata, whensoever there is decline of righteousness and the uprising of unrighteousness, then I loose Myself forth into birth. For the deliverance of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born from age to age. O Arjuna, My birth and actions are divine (supernatural); one who knows thus in the right manner, having cast off this body, comes not to rebirth but comes to Me."

And then in verses 11, 26 and 34 of Chapter IX we have:—

"The ignorant, not knowing My transcendent reality, ignore and despise Me, the Supreme Being lodged in human body, i. e., regard Me, the Supreme, moving by My Yogamāyā in human semblance for the deliverance of the world, as an ordinary man. He who with love offers to Me a leaf or a flower or a fruit or even water, that I accept from the pure desireless devotee and (by manifesting Myself with love in nature) enjoy it. Have thy mind fixed on Me, be devoted to Me, be My adorer, bow thy head before Me, the Vāsudeva; thus taking refuge in Me and being unified with Me, thou shalt attain to me."

Arjuna says:—

"Thou art the transcendent Supreme, the highest Abode, the purest Purity; for all the Ṛṣis have acclaimed Thee as the Eternal Divine Being, the Original Divine of all Divine personalities, the Unborn and the All-pervasive; even so the divine sage Nārada, the Ṛṣis Asita and Devala and Maharṣi Vyāsa, all acclaim Thee as such, and even Thou Thyself sayest the same unto me." (Gītā X. 12-13)

"I behold Thee with a crown on Thy head and a mace and disc in Thy hands, as a mass of splendour blazing on all sides as fire and shining as the Sun from all sides, dazzling to view, and immeasurable. Again I would fain see Thee diademed, with mace and disc in Thy hand as before; put on therefore Thy four-armed shape, hiding Thy universal form, O thousand-armed one, and show that to me." (Gītā XI. 17, 46)

The Lord says: "They who with their mind fixed on Me, in constant devotion to Me, adore Me, the manifest Divine, with supreme faith, are to My mind the best and foremost of all the Yogīs." (Gita. XII. 2)

Sañjaya tells King Dhṛtarāṣṭra: "Remembering over and over again that most marvellous form of Srī Hari, great is my wonder, O king, and I rejoice again and again." (Gītā XVIII. 77)

All these texts point out to the Supreme Being in manifestation. Now as regards the Unmanifest:—

"He, who seated in oneness, adores Me as dwelling in all existences, lives in Me in spite of all his outward action and movement." (VI, 31)

"At the end of a series of births the knower attains to Me. The great soul who sees all this as Vāsudeva is the rarest." (VII. 19)

"That which is called the Unmanifest Immutable (अक्षर), the unmanifest nature of that Immutable is said to be the highest status, and that eternal unmanifest nature is My highest abode, whence those who reach it do not return." (VIII. 21)

"By My unmanifest aspect, all this world is pervaded (as ice by water), and all existences take their stand on My Will, which exists in Me. (Therefore in reality) I am not in them and they are not in Me. But behold My Yogamāyā and My greatness that My Spirit, the Holder, Maintainer and Creator of all these existences, is (really) not in those existences." (IX. 4-5)

"Those devotees who have their senses fully controlled and who with their mind unified with and concentrated on the Eternal, Immovable, Unthinkable, All-pervading, Indescribable, Immutable and Imperishable Unmanifest Divine, adore It, while engaged in doing good to all existences and looking on them with an equal eye, find themselves in Myself." (XII. 3-4)

"He (the Supreme Being) is extended in and out of all moving and unmoving existences, and the moving and unmoving, too, is He; He is imperceptible by reason of His subtlety; He is (everywhere) at hand and also far away. Seated equally in all beings, the Supreme Lord is imperishable in things that perish; he who thus sees, he alone sees. When he perceives all diversity based on the Will of the One Supreme Being, and that Will manifesting in all this extention of existence, then he reaches the Eternal Brahma." (XIII. 15, 27, 30)

(5) The Gītā nowhere says that knowledge is not to be imparted to one who is not a disciple. Arjuna, of course, took himself to be a disciple of the Lord. He said, "I am Thy disciple, I take refuge in Thee; teach me" (शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् II. 7) and accepted the discipleship. The Lord did not say a word against it and always addressed Arjuna as His beloved one, dear friend and devotee, and indirectly

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admitted Himself to be his Guru (the teacher). That Arjuna did attain to the highest status, is stated in the 'Mahābhārata'. (Swargārohaṇa Parva: Chapter VI.)

(6) The Gītā is the nectar that flowed from the mouth of the Lord Himself. Some of the psssages beginning with श्रीभगवानुवाच (The Lord said) are the revealed words of the Vedas and they were uttered by the Lord in the form they are given, and others are compositions in verse by Srī Vyāsadeva based entirely on the dialouge that took place between the Lord and Arjuna in conversational language.

(Kalyan)

Gita and Hindu Solidarity.

By Ayodhya Prasad.

All over the world there is a struggle for freedom. We are rather impatient to be free. But will the so-called freedom solve all our problems? Will it not, on the other hand, lead to a civil war?

We have to face the problem as it stands. We have to realize that the freedom cannot and will not come from the West. We have ourselves to set the house in order. In India Hindus form the majority and the problem of freedom for India is to be solved mainly by Hindus alone.

Unfortunately, to-day, Hindus have lost all their virility. They are hopelessly divided into innumerable sects and sub-sects, creeds and sub-creeds. They have no common platform where they can gather together and express their views. They have no common principle for which they can unite; they have no single Hero under whose flag they all can meet. In fact, the condition of the Hindu race, as a whole, has become pitiable and heart-rending to-day.

People on the other side will say that this diversity is in the very nature of Hinduism. Theism and Atheism both have found shelter under Hinduism. But we cannot shut our eyes against the most fundamental fact that in all the diversity there has always been an undisturbed unity which has expressed itself in the uniformity of Hindu culture. The greatest factor, which was as if the mainstay of our culture, was the Law of Society. The late lamented Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal in his book "Soul of India" writes:—

"But, while granting the utmost freedom of thoughts and institutions, the Aryan Nation-builders took great care to ordain certain rules and rituals, certain sacraments and ceremonies that were binding upon all the sections of the expanding Aryan Society, and that sought to preserve and strengthen their fundamental Unity."

Similarly, the late Dr. Annie Besant in her "Hindu Ideals" says, "In conduct and in social life, however, great strictness has been enforced and this has given stability to the nation."

Amidst the disconcerting vicissitudes that our civilization has met with in so many centuries past the Hindu race has been able to maintain its existence through the cultural uniformity and social laws, while we actually see that many a race in the meanwhile has come into lime-light and sunk into oblivion. Yet, we Hindus have unfortunately shut our eyes to this fact and are to-day out to demolish the very traditions and customs which have kept us alive up till now.

But why this disregard for social laws? The reason is not far to seek. Under the Islamic rule Hindu culture had to undergo a severe trial under most stormy circumstances. No attempt was left to uproot it. It was succeeded

immediately by the Christian Conquest, in which the Missionaries left no stone unturned to discredit the customs of the Hindu Society.

Their mode of living and elegance of style have no doubt attracted us and they have thereby been able to establish their kingdom on our very hearts. Thus the social conquest has followed in the wake of the political conquest. Lala Hardayal of the Punjab rightly said that the cultural conquest of the Hindus by the West is more to be deplored than the mere political conquest.

Islam and Christianity do not depend for their existence on their respective cultures. Their foundation lies in the faith of their followers. Amongst Musalmans anyone who has faith in Mohammad is a Musalman; similarly, amongst Christians one who believes in Jesus Christ is a Christian. They have their sects and sub-sects, no doubt; but they are one in adoring the names of Mohammad and Christ respectively. This one-pointed faith has kept them alive. All Christians unite under the banner of Christ, all Musalmans meet under the flag of Mohammad. But we Hindus, unfortunately, have no common faith, no common name, round which we can muster and present a united front. Had there been a common ground where we could all meet without any distinction, it would not matter if all the social laws were thrown to the winds. But, as our very racial culture depends mainly upon these social laws and customs, we are really in danger of losing our very existence if they are not carefully preserved and protected.

Now the question naturally arises as to whether there can be any such common ground where all the castes and communities comprised in the Hindu race can meet even with their distinctive features and differences. Can we have a common platform where we can stand shoulder to shoulder and feel the tie of brotherhood ? It will be worse than suicide to set aside our old traditions which have been handed down from generation to generation in all our philosophy and culture. We are bound to be swallowed down by the Western culture if we do not find out and fix ourselves to the central factor of Hindu religion.

But can we evade the influence of Western Culture ? Under the present circumstances it does not seem possible. The need of the hour is to study the Western Culture and give it an Indian shape and form. Some years ago, the Prince of Wales, while opening the British Exhibition in Brazil, made a remark which was, "Adopt, adapt, improve". This is, as a matter of fact, the ideal before the British people.

Sir John Woodroffe, an admirer of Hindu civilization, makes a beautiful analysis of the question in his very popular book, "Is India Civilized ?", wherein he clearly says that Hindus in order to adopt and adapt must be ever alert to keep the seed of their own culture intact. If we fail to do so, in the words of the reputed author mentioned above, "Her death approaches. Her last breath will help to unify other living forms."

What, then, is the seed, the central point on which the learned author and our scriptures as well have laid so much of emphasis. I humbly submit the following few facts for consideration:—

(1) The point must be such as would raise us in the eyes of other nations of the world.

(2) It must keep our healthy relation with the western culture intact.

(3) It must not involve so many intricacies and rigidities as would be snapped asunder by the least impact of a new culture. It should be, on the other hand, such as would easily absorb and assimilate any new civilization as Hinduism has done so often in the past.

(4) It must be such as would prepare an able citizen out of every man and would direct the channel of Hindu life towards spirituality—which is our noblest inheritance and aim.

(5) It should be such as would be equally and easily acceptable to every caste and creed of the Hindu race and at the same time it must not interfere with their rites and rituals, customs and manners.

(6) It must be accessible to every layman and at the same time it must guide and inspire even the best philosophers and thinkers.

(7) The point must be such as would leave a wide margin on all sides and should be able to form in itself the central point for the whole universe.

Keeping these outstanding points in mind, we have now to see as to what that centre can be. I have closely studied the causes of the rise and fall of the Hindu race to a considerable extent and have come to the conclusion that 'Srī Bhagavadgītā' alone can form the central point of Hindu Religion.

Some people might say that the Vedas are the books of Divine Knowledge and to them should be given all possible attention. I admit it; but my preference to the 'Gītā' has some solid and irrefutable grounds.

It has most humbly to be submitted that the Vedas are very voluminous on the one hand and its language also is not easily intelligible. Even scholars of Sanskrit find it difficult to dive deep into it, much less can the ordinary layman follow it. It is undoubtedly an edifying and worthy occupation for persons of high mental and spiritual calibre who are at the same time free from the problem of bread and butter. In ordinary day-to-day life the Vedas have very little to add. While, on the contrary, the 'Bhagavadgītā' is a small book of seven hundred verses and herein all the topics of common interest and of a high spiritual and ethical value have been exhaustively dealt with. Its foundation is so strong that from the day it fell from the lips of the Lord till to-day all the Achāryas and spiritual men have bowed their heads in deep reverence to its profound philosophy. In the various Purāṇas Maharṣi Vedavyāsa has sung its glory so exquisitely. Sankara, the founder of the Adwaita system of philosophy, Rāmānuja, the propounder of 'Viśiṣṭādwaita" (qualified Monism), Vallabha, the father of 'Suddhādwaita' (pure Monism), and last but not the least the late lamented Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi to-day—all these eminent Achāryas and thinkers are almost enamoured of the 'Gītā' and have considered it a rare fortune and proud privilege to write commentaries on the 'Gītā'. Not to speak of India alone, eminent men of other countries also have adored this book. Scholars of America, Germany, England and many other civilized countries of the modern world have admired its philosophy and very humbly bowed their heads before it. William von Humboldt, a famous German scholar, says, "The 'Bhagavadgītā' is the deepest and the sublimest production that the world possesses. I read it with permanent feeling of gratitude towards fate that has let me live in order to study this book."

Sadhu T. L. Vaswani, an eminent thinker of to-day, has well said, "The marvels of Science, the wonders of Science are many. But I believe, I do not exaggerate when I say, that all the wonder, all the marvels of Science are less wonderful, less marvellous than the wonderful marvellous book, the 'Bhagavadgītā'.

The 'Gītā' is an epitome of ancient Hindu culture. It is the gist of all the Vedas, the quintessence of all the scriptures. The following 'Sloka' is well-known:—

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

"All the Upaniṣads are like cows, Srī Kṛṣṇa, the Divine Cowherd, is the Milker, Arjuna is the calf, and this Divine Gītā is the nectar which has been milked out of it."

The 'Bhagavadgītā' is equally accessible to the highest of the high

and lowest of the low. It is a book containing profound truths of a permanent value and interest, which are beyond the influence of time. There are two aspects of religion: Principles and Practices. The 'Gītā' has allowed full freedom in the realm of practices and hence it is that it is eternally fresh, eternally original. Civilizations will appear and die but the 'Gītā' will ever remain untainted. It can easily absorb and assimilate every culture. The reputed Yogī Sri Aurobindo writes:—

"It is large, free, subtle and profound. It is for all time and for all men, not for a particular age or country. Specially it is breaking free from external forms, details, dogmatic notions, and going back to principles and the great facts of our nature and our being.

"The 'Gītā' is a Book that has worn extraordinarily well and it is always fresh and still, in its real substance, quite as new as when it first appeared."

The 'Gītā' alone in the whole range of world-literature has the unique power and efficacy to prepare a perfect citizen and inspire a man on to the path of spiritual culture. The 'Bhagavadgītā' does not preach asceticism. It was not given to a Sannyāsī or a hermit living in seclusion, apart from the world. It is really meant for the man of the world busy in the struggle of life, and it clearly enunciates that whosoever is honest to his rightful and legitimate duties attaching to the particular station in life in which he has been placed by birth and circumstances can attain God. Lokamanya Tilak has discussed this question at length in his "Gītā-Rahasya."

All the various creeds resting in the all-embracing bosom of Hinduism acknowledge the 'Bhagavadgītā', nay, the Achāryas who gave to the world the different schools of philosophy have recognized it as an authority and have endeavoured to base their specific doctrines on the same. The 'Bhagavadgītā' saw the light of the day at a time when many a faith was still floating, and thus it easily and beautifully synthesises the whole arena of thought and philosophy of that age. Hence it is that it is equally respected and revered by all the faiths even to-day.

The 'Bhagavadgītā' is a short and simple book accessible even to every layman. At the same time the quotations given above clearly show that even great philosophers could not fathom the depth of the Gītā.

The 'Bhagavadgītā' can serve as the sheet-anchor not only of Hinduism but of all the religions. F. T. Brookes writes in his wonderful book "The Gospel of Life":—

"Not only does 'Bhagavadgītā' fulfil every condition needed for becoming... a priceless asset of national life to be; it is pre-eminently a Scripture of the future World-Religion, a gift of India's glorious past to the moulding of a still more glorious future of mankind."

Thus we see that the 'Bhagavadgītā' alone is the chief motive power that can unite the Hindu race and bind it in one common tie of love. We cannot ignore Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa while taking refuge in the Gītā. We must have a personality under whose banner we can all unite and at whose feet we should be ever prepared to surrender our very life and feel proud of it. There is no name other than Srī Kṛṣṇa which commands the reverence of all Hindus. Srī Kṛṣṇa rules over the very heart of the whole Hindu race and no other name has such an everlasting association with the Hindu ideals as Srī Kṛṣṇa has. Opinions may vary in acknowledging Srī Kṛṣṇa as the very incarnation of God but all Hindus are one in taking Him to be an ideal hero.

Hindus will have no objection in acknowledging Srī Kṛṣṇa as the World-teacher, as He not only fulfills all the conditions entitling one to such a title but surpasses all the other world-teac hers.

Thus the common 'Mantra' of all the Hindus must be:—

श्रीकृष्ण एव जगतां परमो गुरुः श्री-
गीतैव सारभरिता परमं सुशास्त्रम् ।
इत्येव यस्य हृदये दृढनिश्चयः स्याज्
ज्ञेयः स हिन्दुरयमेव हि नः सुमन्त्रः ॥

"Srī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme World-teacher and the 'Bhagavadgītā' is the highest scripture—one who holds this view is a true Hindu: such is our beautiful Mantra."

In this connection it should be remembered that a systematic and detailed life-sketch of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa must be written down in the light of the 'Gītā.' Whatever has been written about Him till to-day represents only a partial view, dealing as it does with one or more aspects of His life and that, too, in somewhat exaggerated form. Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa has Himself said in the Gītā:—

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥

(IV. 9)

"He who thus knoweth My divine birth and action, in its essence, having cast off the body, cometh not to birth again but cometh unto Me, O Arjuna."

Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa took to action simply with a view to setting up an ideal before the world. He has given the following picture of an ideal Yogī:—

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥
नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥

(*Gita* III. 17-18)

"But the man who rejoiceth in the Self, with the Self is satisfied, and is content in the Self, for him verily there is nothing to do. For him there is no interest in things done in this world, nor in things not done, nor doth any object of his depend on any being."

In conclusion, it may be submitted that the life of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa is the highest ideal before the world, and, if Hindus want to unite and stand together, they must take refuge in the 'Gītā' and her maker, Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, as this alone will solve the problem of Hindu Solidarity.

Matchless Beauty of the Gita.

With the deductions or rather qualifications which I have thus premised, I hesitate not to pronounce the 'Gītā' a performance of great originality, of a sublimity of conception, reasoning and diction almost unequalled among all the known religions of mankind, of a theology accurately corresponding with that of the Christian Dispensation and most powerfully illustrating its fundamental doctrines.

—*Warren Hastings.*

Self-offering to the Divine in the Gita.

By Jwalaprasad Kanodia.

Of the various forms of devotion, self-offering to the Lord is considered to be the best. It has been called by the Bhaktas by various names such as Self-dedication, Self-conscecration and Self-surrender. This is not of supreme importance in the path of Devotion only but is the main guiding principle in all the ways that lead to perfect bliss. Those who aspire for it have to grow from the very beginning in the spirit of Self-surrender. Just as we have in the Śruti—the revealed word—the command for those who seek after liberation: 'स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्'—that such a seeker should approach the Guru, the Master who is well-versed in the Vedas and is established in Brahma, with sacred fuel-sticks for sacrifice in his hand. So we have in the Gītā also the word of the Divine Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa for those who seek after knowledge:—

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥

(*Gita* IV. 34)

They have to go to "the seers of Truth and, by bowing and asking over and over again (till all doubts are cleared) and by serving them, know the Truth; they will in this way give that knowledge to them." This shows that for Bliss one has to go first to the Guru, the teacher, and take refuge in his feet and then, initiated by the Guru, has to offer himself to the Divine. Such a teacher of truth carries such a self-dedicated disciple to the lotus-feet of the Lord and there fulfils his mission. The real Guru is he who thus offers his disciples who have taken refuge in him, to the Supreme Spirit. If, even after having taken refuge in a Guru, the disciple is deprived of the Divine protection, then, it must be said that either the surrender is not complete and sincere or the Guru himself is not a true Guru. The duty of a disciple is to take refuge in his master, with a pure and sincere heart; and the duty of a master is to secure for him the Divine shelter. Therefore for a seeker after liberation the way lies in surrender, from the very beginning.

And this act of surrender is considered to be the main requirement for all classes of seekers after the Supreme—be he a Sāṃkhyayogī, a Karmayogī, a Haṭhayogī or Bhaktiyogī. In all these various ways, the main principle is that of surender. They begin with surrender and end also in surrender. Space would not allow an elaborate exposition of this point. For the present, therefore, my purpose is to place before the readers of both sexes my humble views regarding "Self-surrender" as preached in the Gītā. It is necessary to state here, before proceeding, that those alone know the essentials of surrender, who have no other refuge to take in than the Supreme. I am persuaded to discuss this subject, only as a student, in the hope of deriving some help from it in my humble seekings, and place my views before the reader only as a child.

The Gītā begins with Self-surrender and ends also with it. In other words, it may be said that the very heart of the teaching of the Lord lies here. When

Arjuna, standing on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra, overtaken by grief, found himself in a terrible fix as to what he should do in the circumstances and how to get out of that crisis, he only took refuge in the divine feet of the World-teacher, the darling of Nanda.

कार्पण्यदोषोऽपहतस्वभावः
पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसंमूढचेताः ।
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे
शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥

(*Gita* II. 7)

"My whole nature has become bankrupt by self-piety and my heart and mind and vital power all bewildered, and I cannot find the *Dharma*—the law of action. I take refuge in Thee as a disciple, give me what is best for me."

When Arjuna thus surrendered himself to the Lord, then the very ocean of compassion, the Lord Divine, gave out His teaching to him, with various arguments and illustrations and concluded it thus:—

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

(*Gita* XVIII. 66)

"Abandon all Dharmas (laws of action) and give thyself to Me alone. From all bonds of sin I shall set thee free; do not grieve."

Here the teaching of the Lord culminates in a complete self-offering. This is the highest message of the Lord Vāsudeva—son of Vasudeva. The rest of the discourse tells us as to who is qualified to have this teaching and what its importance. In the above verse, the शरण्यं -the 'Refuge' is the Lord Himself, who is the fountain-head of all blessings and virtues, and शरणागत, the self-surrendered disciple is Arjuna (one who makes a total surrender), the result of the surrender being a release from all sin, and being surrender itself the means.

Now let us see what the word 'Surrender' implies. The word occurs in the Gītā at four different places. Its implications, in order, are as follows:—

(1) In verse 49 of Chapter II the word means shelter or protection or refuge.

(2) In verse 18 of Chapter IX the word means that the Lord alone is the place of refuge.

(3) In verse 62 of Chapter XVIII the word means taking refuge in Him with the whole being and in all ways of mind and speech and body.

(4) In verse 66 of Chapter XVIII the sentence 'मामेकं शरणं व्रज' means "Take refuge in ME alone."

In addition to this, the word शरणागत has been used at several other places also. Thus,

(1) Verse 14 (Chapter VII)—मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते, and

(2) Verse 15 (Chapter VII)—न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः—means that they who seek after ME alone, swim across this nature of Ignorance. The evil-doers, the worst of men whose souls are held in thrall, do not seek ME.

(3) Verse 4 (Chapter XV)—तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये means—I am given up to that original personality Srī Nārāyaṇa.

These passages clearly show that the importance of surrender to the Divine as a way to attaining eternal bliss is preached in the Gītā. There is no self-will, the so-called freedom, in the

way of surrender, nor is there anything reserved for oneself; it is an open and whole-hearted self-offering. So long as the seeking devotee retains his self. will or independence in any form or in any way or reserves anything to himself—or has in any action or mood an egoistic spirit, his surrender is not complete and is therefore defective. A true surrender is consecration of all that one is and has to the Lord—'सर्वभावेन शरणं गच्छ'. He has to get immerged in the Lord, without any attachment to his individual qualities, powers or inclinations. Just as a material object exists, and is moved only by the Lord, as a tool in the Divine hands, he lives and works in the spirit of the Sloka: 'त्वया हृषीकेश हृदिस्थितेन यथा नियुक्तोऽस्मि तथा करोमि'—According as I am appointed by Thee, O Hṛṣīkeśa ! seated in my heart, so I act.

Those who repeat this Śloka without having surrendered themselves are hypocrites. Truly surrendered is he whose actions are not directed by his own self-will, but by the Will of the Master. Arjuna understood the word 'शरण' and expressed it in this very sense.

The Lord sums up His teaching in the one verse so oft-repeated:—

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

(*Gita* XVIII. 66)

The Vaiṣṇavas believe this to be the essence of the Lord's message.

The Lord Himself has said:—

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः श‍ृणु मे परमं वचः ।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥

(XVIII. 64.)

"To My final word, the secret of all secrets, once more hearken. I yearn with steadfast love for thee. Hence I tell thee what is best for thee."

The word 'गुह्यतमम्' (the secretmost) is here purposely used and has later been explained in verses 65 and 66 of Chapter XVIII. After concluding His discourse, the Lord, in order to test Arjuna, asks certain questions (*vide* verse 72, Chapter XVIII) to which Arjuna answers 'करिष्ये वचनं तव' (I shall do Thy bidding). The Lord thereupon was satisfied to see that his disciple Arjuna understood the implications of His teachings. A true Self-offerer never bothers about his duty, nor does he crave for liberation. He is like a harp "fitted for the rhythm of the Eternal." He little for cares for profit or loss, birth or death, honour or dishonour. The late Swami Mangalanath used to say that, of all the right ways of devotion, the way of surrendering oneself to the Lord was extraordinarily divine. But why should one call it divine or supernatural ? The answer is: whereas in all other ways of devotion the burden of finding out the best way rests on the shoulder of a devotee, in the case of Self-surrender it passes on to the Lord Himself. In the former case one has to look after himself, while, in the latter, the Lord Himself has to look after him.

A devotee has well said that leaving everything to the care of the Lord one enjoys an undisturbed perfect rest.

Śrī Śukadeva truly said: त्वयाभिगुप्ता विचरन्ति निर्भयाः—"Protected by Thee, they move fearlessly."

The Lord protects his refugee as fondly as the mother protects her suckling. The mother possesses a very limited power of protection, whereas the Lord's resource is infinite. Therefore the best way to attain to eternal bliss is to surrender oneself to the Lord. The door of the Lord is open to all,—even the meanest of the mean can resort to it.

After having taken refuge in the Lord with the purest heart, the devotee becomes free of all vices. The Lord does not reject even the worst sinner if he takes refuge in Him. Therefore, in the words of Vibhīṣaṇa in the Rāmāyaṇa, let us surrender ourselves with all sins heaped over us down in front to the Divine Lord and lay ourselves at His lotus-feet.

स्रवन सुजस सुनि आयेउँ, प्रभु भंजन भवभीर ।
त्राहि त्राहि आरतहरन, सरन सुखद रघुबीर ॥

"I have come to Thee, O Lord, having heard Thy praise that Thou destroyest all fear of mortality; save me, deliver me, O Hero of the Raghu clan; for Thou art the blessed refuge that takes away all grief, pain and sorrow of those who surrender themselves to Thee."

The Soul, God and Brahma in the Gita.

By A lover of Gita.

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन् पुरुषः परः ॥

(Gita XIII. 22)

"The *Puruṣa* (Spirit), even while embodied, is really transcendent (beyond the triple nature). He has been called—the Witness, the Guide, the Supporter, the Enjoyer (of pleasure and pain), the Supreme Lord, and the Oversoul."

The wise and the learned also tell us that, according to the *Gītā*, *Brahma* (Pure Reality), *Īśvara* (Personal God) and *Jīva* (the individual Ego) are all one. The verse quoted above points out that the transcendent Supreme Being Himself is known as the *Jīva* while enjoying (pleasure and pain), as God when creating, maintaining and destroying the universe, and as *Brahma* in His pure unqualified state. The word भोक्ता (Enjoyer) in this verse stands for the embodied soul, the words उपद्रष्टा, अनुमन्ता, भर्ता and महेश्वर (Witness, Guide, Supporter and Supreme Lord) signify the word परमात्मा (Oversoul) Personal God denotes the *Brahma* (Pure Reality). All these terms being adjuncts of the Supreme Self, they represent the various aspects of one and the same Reality. These three aspects have been dealt with in the beginning of the eighth chapter in reply to three out of the seven questions asked by Arjuna. In reply to the first question, viz. "What is *Brahma*?" ('किं तद् ब्रह्म'), the Lord says: 'अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमम्' (*i. e.*, the transcendent immutable Supreme Spirit, which is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss combined, is *Brahma*). The next question is 'किं अध्यात्मम्' (What is अध्यात्म—the principle of Self in nature)? The reply to this is that अध्यात्म is the fundamental Self-principle of becoming or the individual Ego (स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते). The third and last question is, 'What is अधियज्ञ (the Principle of sacrifice)?' In reply to which the Lord says: 'अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र' (I as Personal God am the अधियज्ञ in this body). The same thing was told by the Lord before proceeding to state the reasons of His descent (अवतार):—

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥

(IV. 6)

"I am the imperishable and the unborn and the Lord of all existences;

yet, I, standing over My nature, appear by My *Yogamāyā* (limiting power)." He has in a later passage clearly said, "I appear like an ordinary human creature in the person of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but in reality I am not so. I am the Divine Lord. The ignorant people, not knowing Me in My transcendent reality, as the Supreme Lord of all existences, despise Me in human semblance, i. e., look upon Me, embodied in human form through My *Yogamāyā* to redeem the world as an ordinary human being." (IX. 11) Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has in several places in the *Gītā* pointed out the oneness of Personal God with the Supreme Reality (*Brahma*):—

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥

(XIV. 27)

"I am the Support of the immutable transcendent Reality and of the nectar of immortality of the Eternal abode and also of the unbroken and undivided *Ānanda* (Bliss)". In other words, *Brahma*, immortality, the Immutable Eternal Law and Absolute Bliss are all My names, and as such I am their foundation. Again, there are verses in the *Gītā* which show that even the individual Ego is not different from God:—

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यञ्च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥

(X. 20)

क्षेत्रज्ञञ्चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।

(XIII. 2)

"O Arjuna, I am the Self seated in the hearts of all existences; I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all beings."

"Take Me to be the Knower of the Field in all the Fields (the bodies), *i. e.,* the embodied soul as well, O Bhārata."

Besides these, there are passages to indicate that there is nothing else besides the *Brahma*, who is All-Truth, All-Knowledge and All-Bliss:—

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥

(VII. 7)

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।
अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥

(IX. 19)

वासुदेवः सर्वमिति··················

(VII. 19)

"There is nothing without or beyond Me, O Dhanañjaya. All this has been strung together as beads made of cotton yarn into a thread."

"I am the giver of heat and light in the Sun, I hold back as well as send forth showers, O Arjuna. I am Immortality as well as death; I am सत् (the being) and the असत् (non-being)."

"All this is Vāsudeva."

In this way the *Gītā* establishes the oneness of the *Jīva, Iśvara* and the *Brahma*. To explain this oneness, the illustration of ether (आकाश) is adopted by the learned. They say that the embodied soul is like the ether in a vessel, Personal God as the ether covered by clouds, and *Brahma* as the whole ethereal expansion. Just as the one ethereal substance appears threefold according to the limitations imposed on it, so the one *Brahma* appears as three. This explanation is partially acceptable and useful as well, although in reality the *Brahma* is one and does not admit of any such division. Ether is

mutable, and does admit of changes; but the *Brahma* is immutable, perfectly pure, conscious and immobile; it is not liable to change, like ether. Really the subject is too deep to be handled. Srī Bhagavān Himself has said, in order to elucidate the point, that "the embodied soul is My portion (ममैवांशो जीवलोके)"; but what the nature of that portion is, is difficult to understand. Some scholars adopt the illustration of a dream to explain this. Just as in a dream one sees so many objects and persons and deals with them, but, when awake, regards all those objects and persons besides himself as non-existent, even though existent as his portions in the dream, even so are all these embodied souls portions of the One Supreme Being. The illustration, though very useful and significant, does not furnish a clue to the reality of the matter. For, we cannot conceive anything like a dream, delusion or infatuation, even for a moment, in the case of God who is eternally conscious, infallible and the very embodiment of knowledge. Therefore it is almost impossible to understand or much less to explain the real Truth of the thing with the help of illustrations and reason. This can be understood only by following the methods pointed out in the *Gītā* and through the grace of God and God-attained souls. It is therefore that Yama addresses the following words to Nachiketā:—

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

(Katha III. 14)

"Arise, awake, go to the men of knowledge and get knowledge from them." Śrī Bhagavān also says in the *Gītā*:—

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥

(Gita. IV. 34)

"Learn thou that by prostrating thyself at the feet of the wise who know the truth, by rendering them all service that thou art capable of, and questioning them with a guileless heart again and again until thou art satisfied. They will instruct thee in wisdom."

But this should not be taken to mean that there are not in the *Gītā* verses propounding duality. There are a number of passages occurring in the *Gītā* which contain a description of the three aspects separately; *e. g.*

ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वामृतमश्नुते ।
अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ॥

(Gita XIII. 12)

"I will speak to thee at some length about that which ought to be known and by knowing which one attains to the immortal bliss. That is the beginningless transcendent Reality which is called neither being nor non-being, (for it is beyond them both)."

It has further been called by various names such as 'अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमम्'—Immutable Supreme Reality; and also spoken of as Unthinkable(अचिन्त्यम्), All-pervading (सर्वत्रगम्), Indefinable (अनिर्देश्यम्), Constant (ध्रुवम्) Immutable (कूटस्थम्), Immobile (अचलम्), Unmanifest (अव्यक्तम्), and Indestructible (अक्षरम्), etc. The Śrutis (the revealed words) also speak of It as 'सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म'–an embodiment of Truth and Infinite Knowledge, (*Taittirīya Up.* II. 1) or as 'प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म'—'The Highest Knowledge' (*Aitareya Up.* III. 3), and so on.

Personal God has been spoken of as the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the universe:—

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥

(Gita, IX. 10)

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।
मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥

(X. 6)

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन् सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥

(XVIII. 61)

"Under My supervision, Nature looses forth the moving and the unmoving: because of this, O Kaunteya, the universe revolves."

"The seven great Ṛṣis and the more ancient four (Sanaka and others) and also the fourteen Manus, who are all devoted to Me, are born of My Will; of them this whole race was begotten."

"The Lord dwelleth in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, spinning them round on the wheel (of this body according to their respective actions) by His illusive power."

We have Him again described as "The Creator of the four orders" (IV. 13), as 'The Supreme Lord of all worlds' (V. 29), as 'the creation and destruction of the whole universe' (VII. 6), even as "the Time-Spirit engaged in destroying the universe." (XI. 32)

The individual soul (जीवात्मा) has been variously described as the enjoyer, the doer, the knower, the portion, imperishable, and eternal. In Chapter. II. 18, for instance, we find Him characterised as 'eternal, imperishable, and immeasurable'; again, in XIII. 21 as 'seated in Nature and enjoying its qualities, and by attachment to them causing himself to be born in good and evil wombs', in XV. 7 as 'the eternal portion', and in XV. 16 as 'immutable and indestructible.'

Thus we find in the *Gītā* passages propounding monism and dualism both. While, in one place, monism has been spoken very highly of, at another, as, for instance, in Chap. XII. 2, we find the highest praise bestowed on the devotee to a Personal God, which lends support to the doctrine of dualism. The question therefore naturally arises whether the *Gītā* teaches pure Monism or Dualism. We find here both and cannot therefore call the one or the other as wrong. But two contradictory statements cannot be true. Either of the two must be false. If we think over the matter a little more deeply, we will find that the ultimate reality can neither be called dual nor can it be called one. It is something beyond all these terms, nay, beyond the ken of mind and speech and cannot be understood or explained by means of words or arguments. Those who know it, know it for themselves; they too, cannot describe it. The Śruti says:—

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च ।
यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥

(Kena II. 2)

"I do not think that I know the Reality rightly, nor do I think that I do not know; for I do know also. Whoever of us knows the Reality, knows it in the same way, viz., that he neither knows it nor does he know it not."

So long as one does not understand the real truth, it is safer and more useful for him to recognize dualism and practise accordingly. The fact that monism and dualism both have been described in the *Gītā* shows that the compassionate Lord has set forth two paths for two sets of seekers. The ultimate reality is unthinkable and indescribable. It is only by the grace of God that one can know it and the easiest way to it is complete

self-surrender to the Lord. Srī Bhagavān has said:—

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥

(IX. 32)

"The womanfolk, the Vaiśyas, and the Sūdras, nay, even those of sinful birth, taking refuge in Me, attain to the highest goal." Srī Bhagavān further declares:—

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥

(Gita. XVIII. 62)

"O Bhārata, surrender thyself with all thy being to Him. By His Grace thou shalt obtain Supreme peace and the eternal abode." That God is Srī Kṛṣṇa Himself and therefore in the end He says:—

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

(XVIII. 66)

"Leaving aside all Dharmas, *i. e.*, dependence on all duties, take thou refuge in Me, Vāsudeva, alone. I shall deliver thee of all sins, do not grieve."

(*Kalyan*)

The Central Idea of the Bhagavadgita.

By B. L. Atreya, M. A., D. Litt.

The *Bhagavadgītā* is the most successful attempt to present in a short compass what may now be called the Hindu View of Life. It is a synthetic epitome of all that has been elaborated in the Upaniṣads, the Itihāsas and Purāṇas and the various Darśanas. Countless commentaries and dissertations have been written on this little work, both by ancient and modern, eastern and western scholars, and divergent opinions have been held with regard to its doctrines. A large volume can be written if they are referred to and discussed. In this short paper an attempt is made to present in brief outline the central idea of the work by referring to the text alone.

The *Bhagavadgītā* is not a philosophical treatise to expound any metaphysical system, nor is it an attempt to describe the revelations of mystic experience. In it the author professes to give the eternal message of God (*Bhagavān*), who is "the Source, the Stay, the End, the Undecaying Seed, the Home, the Goal, the Highest Value, the Observer, the Controller, the Protector, the Refuge and the Friend of all creatures" (IX. 18), to the man who has become conscious of his own ignorance, limitation and suffering. It points out to us the miserable state of man as he is, the Ideal that every man can realize and the methods of realizing the Ideal.

Man, as he is in his present imperfect state, is ignorant even of his own being. In reality he is a part of the Divine Being (XV. 7), which he does not know. His consciousness is enveloped by unconsciousness (V. 15) and so he has wrong notions of himself and his relations to other things (V. 10; VII. 27). Wrongly identifying himself with the body, mind and the senses, he feels their origination, decay and destruction as his own and thus undergoes perpetual birth, old age and death, and is tossed up and down, hither and thither, in this vast

ocean of the changing world (VIII. 15, 16, 19; II. 22; IX. 3). Contemplating upon the enjoyment of the pleasures of the objects of the senses, he gets attracted towards them, desires to possess and enjoy them. Failing to have them immediately, he feels agitated in his mind. Agitation of mind gives rise to delusion, and delusion confuses memory. Confused memory destroys the thinking capacity, and, when a man cannot think, he is lost (II. 62-63). Thus, on account of the pleasure and pain that arise from the desire of, and aversion to, the objects of the senses, all individuals are deluded in this world (VII. 27). There is no enjoyment of sense-pleasure which is not associated with pain (VI. 23). All worldly pleasures terminate in pain, simply because they have an end as well as a beginning (V. 22). To undergo this perpetual pleasure and pain is the lot of all creatures. Most of us are quite satisfied with this lot. From day to day we go on living this kind of ignorant, imperfect and painful life without ever pausing to think whether any better state of existence is possible and realizable. But there are a few who become dissatisfied with this state of affairs, who realize the futility of running after the mirage of life to satisfy their eternal thirst for omniscience, perfection and everlasting and unmixed Joy (VII. 3). It is to such discontented, dissatisfied and aspiring souls that the Lord reveals the profoundest Secret (IX. 1).

To them He points out in the *Bhagavadgītā* that they are right in not being satisfied with the little and mixed joy that they have now and then, for the Joy Absolute and Eternal can be theirs if they only would make an effort to realize it; that their doubts, discontent and dissatisfaction have a meaning and purpose, for in reality they are not what they know themselves to be. Their surface view of themselves and the Universe is partial and false (XVI. 8-11). Looked at from the Centre and as a Whole, the Universe is Divine and the individual only a phase of the Divine Being. Deep within the individual and the universe there is Perfection and Calmness, in which there is no ignorance, no pain, no change, no want, no birth, no death; which is the Full, the Absolute Calm, and the Undivided whole, the heart of both being and non-being. To realize this state of existence is the Ideal of every individual. To wake up in this Cosmic and Divine Consciousness is the Highest purpose, the Greatest Value, the Finest Art of life. It is called the greatest *Siddhi* (accomplishment) in the *Bhagavadgītā* (III. 4; IV. 12; XII. 10; XIV. 1; XVI. 23; XVIII. 45, 46, 50). The *Siddhi*, according to the *Gītā*, is reaching, entering, identifying with and becoming the Absolute *Brahma* (IV. 3; V. 20, 25, 26; VI. 27 28; XIII- 30; XIV. 26; XVIII. 53, 54). It is becoming one with and acquiring the nature of the Divinity which is embodied in the person of the Teacher Himself (XVIII. 55, 65; III. 19; IV. 10; IV. 9; VIII. 5, 15; IX. 34; X. 10). It is attaining the State which is the First and the Last (VIII. 28). In that Experience there is Absolute, Eternal and Unshakable Peace (II. 71; IV. 39; V. 13, 29; V. 15; XVIII. 62). It is characterised by undecaying, unmixed, intensest and the best kind of Happiness (IV. 21, 27; V. 21), which never ends in pain (II. 51; VI. 23; XIV. 20). It is the true and Ultimate Goal of life (VIII. 13: 15, 21; XIII. 22; XVI. 22). Having attained it, there is no returning back to the experience of repeated birth and death (II. 51; IV.

9; V. 17; VIII. 15, 16, 21, 23; XIV. 20; XV. 4. 6). There remains nothing further to be attained or strived for (III. 17; XVIII. 49). Thus the *Bhagavadgītā* teaches us the art of Deification of the individual, which is the greatest of all arts.

The Idea of Godhead that we get from the *Bhagavadgītā* is very comprehensive and difficult to understand. God, according to the *Gītā*, is the Absolute, Ultimate, Beginningless and Endless, Undecaying, Unchanging and ever-Calm Reality underlying the Universe (VIII. 3; VII. 7; VIII. 10; VIII. 20 ; X. 2, 20; XIV. 19; XV. 16). He cannot be called either being or non-being (XIII. 12). He is both being and non-being, the immortal as well as the perishable (IX. 19). From Him come out all the beings of the Universe. He is the Seed of the multiplicity of the world (VII. 6, 9; X. 2, 5. 8; XIII. 16, 30). He is immanent in everything of the world and in all the individuals. All beings are controlled by Him from within. He is the Self of our selves, the essence of all things, the master, supervisor and controller of all (XVIII. 61; V. 29; VI. 29; VII. 7; VIII. 22; X. 20; XV. 15, 17; VIII. 9; XV. 12, 14; X. 39; XIII. 17, 22, 31; XIV. 27). He is, in fact, everything, and the entire Universe is His own Body (XIII. 13, 14, 15). He knows the past, present and the future of everything (VII. 26). He is the author of the Social Order with its division into classes (IV. 13) and interferes with it whenever disorder prevails in it. Although impersonal, He is the Greatest of all personalities (XV. 18) and assumes even a human or any other form to establish harmony and to dispel the evil forces that may have gathered strong in the world (IV. 6–8). He is the Eternal Death which destroys all in course of time (X. 33, 34). Yet He is a loving and sympathising friend of all creatures and takes particular care of those who wholly and solely surrender themselves to Him (IX. 22). In spite of the multiplicity of the world existing within Him, He remains the One undivided Whole (XI. 7, 12). He is the Source of the Eternal Law of Right and the Treasure-house of the Absolute Bliss (XIV. 17). In short, God, according to the *Bhagavadgītā* is "the Source, the Stay, the End, the Undecaying Seed, the Home, the Goal, the Highest Value, the Observer, the Controller, the Refuge, the Protector, and the Friend of all creatures" (IX. 18). He is the embodiment of the perfection that every individual should aim at.

What, then, is the Method of Deification of ourselves ? Here, too, the view of the *Bhagavadgītā* is very comprehensive. Highest and all-sided perfection being the Ideal, no aspect of life should be allowed to remain stunted and undeveloped. All-sided expansion has to be brought about. The individual who is ordinarily confined to a very narrow field of knowledge, intuition, feeling, love and action has to come out of the narrow shell which he wrongly regards as his personality by breaking through all limitations. He must have all the knowledge about the Universe and himself that philosophy and science can give. Having come to know the Truth, he will acquire Cosmic Consciousness and peace (V. 29; IV. 39). He should supplement and verify his knowledge attained through the study of philosophy and sciences by the mystic Intuition of the Reality which exists in Its fullness within the

heart of all, which can be attained by the methods of *Yoga* (VI. 26-28). He should so aspire for the Ideal and love It that nothing but the Ideal fills his mind. He should always think of the Ideal, be devoted to It, and be prepared to sacrifice everything for It. In course of time he is transformed into the object he constantly thinks of. Thus is the intense and unreserved love of God the secret of attaining Godhead (VIII. 22, 34, 7, 8, 14; XI. 55; XII. 8; XVIII. 55, 62, 66). He should perform the duty that falls to his share as a member of the social order, unselfishly and without wishing any reward for himself, for the good of all and with a view to maintaining the harmony of the social order. Sacrificing his individual interests for the good of the society, working in unison with the Cosmic purpose, and being in tune with the Infinite whole, the individual breaks asunder his little ego and gradually expands into the Cosmic Person, who is ever active for the Good of the entire Universe and attains the Blissful Peace (XVIII. 46; II. 5; XVIII. 45; V. 12; III. 19; II. 20; III. 15). Thus, the individual, in order to attain perfection, which is nothing short of Godhead, has to know God through Science and philosophy, to feel God through Yogic Intuition, to love God and to work in unison with God's Cosmic plan. There cannot be one-sided expansion of the individual. Expansion in one aspect of his being involves that of the other aspects, too. So, one may take to any one of these methods. The philosopher, the mystic, the devotee, and the man of service ultimately reach the same goal. Like all roads leading to Rome, all paths having God as their goal lead to God. From the point of view of the goal no path is better or worse than the other. It is the business of the individual to select the path that suits him most. This, in short, is the message of the *Bhagavadgītā*, the Bible of the Hindus.

Four types of Bhaktas.

Fourfold in division are the righteous ones who worship Me, O Arjuna: the suffering, the seeker for knowledge, the self-interested and the wise, O Lord of the Bharatas.

Of these, the wise, constantly harmonised, worshipping the One, is the best; I am supremely dear to the wise, and he is dear to Me.

Noble are all these, but I hold the wise as verily Myself; he, SELF-united , is fiixed on Me, the highest Path.

At the close of many births the man full of wisdom cometh unto Me; "Vāsudeva (a name of Srī Kṛṣṇa, as the son of Vasudeva) is all," saith he, the Mahātmā, very difficult to find.

(*Gītā VII. 16—19*)

Anna-Dosha or Food-Pollution.

By Bhagvati Prasad Singh, M. A.

Most of the sober thinkers of the world have come to the conclusion that the laws of *Karma* or actions are not only very subtle and inscrutable, but inevitable too. So are many other laws discovered long long ago by our sages and proved by the experience of ages to be entirely correct. It is a pity that the present-day flaring civilization is not tolerent enough to consider patiently and dispassionately the old experience of ages; although, as a matter of fact, it has to admit the correctness of the same principles after passing through unpleasant stages. This is what is meant by the adage that the wisdom of the East begins where that of the West ends. A close study of the present-day civilization along with that of the 16th chapter of the *Gītā* leaves no doubt about its being permeated with *Āsurī Vṛtti* or Satanic propensities. Look at the amount of mutual jealousies, selfishness, mammon-worship and callous indifference towards the poor and the deliberately suppressed millions in any of the so-called advanced countries, and you cannot but have a vision of the terrible end to which this civilization is fast heading.

This is a time of very great ordeal for our old civilization. It is our duty, in our own interest, to think over our ancient customs and modes of living. There is still hope for us and nature has blessed us, sons of Bhārata-varṣa, with physical and mental gifts for which even gods crave. Those of us who have patiently tried the experiments laid down by our sages, have in many cases solved the mystery of existence and realized the essence of life. There is not the least doubt about this.

In the present paper I shall consider some of the laws relating to food. I shall not go deep into detail for fear of prolixity. Those who are interested in the subject will have plenty of old literature to study.

The cardinal principle in respect of food is that it be the product of one's honest labour. It is for this reason that many people practise what is called *Aparigraha,* or non-acceptance of anything from anybody. It follows that food purchased from ill-gotten money or taken as a gift from a person who is not strictly honest, is to be scrupulously avoided.

The question of bribe or ill-gotten wealth incidentally crops up at this stage. This is one of the saddest things in life. Those who succumb to these temptations do not know the eternal wrong that they are doing to their own interests. Ill-gotten wealth never stays or pays; it goes away as it has come. It has rightly been said that what is easily got is easily spent. The net result is, however, a serious thing. A man given to such habits naturally becomes reckless in his expenditure. His troubles begin only when the source of such ill-gotten income stops. We are all familiar with cases where such people end their lives most miserably.

It is a scientific truth that our mind and other finer faculties are the ultimate products of the food that we

take into our bodies. Students of Tantric rites will be aware of the different results produced in the nature of the devotee by the nature of his seat at the time of his devotion. I am not referring to what are known as Āsanas or poses, but to the skins and other material, like blanket, cloth, Kuśa-mat, on which the devotee sits. *Japa* of a *Mantra* done on a tiger's skin will have a totally different effect on the nature of a man than that done on a deer's skin. Similarly in Tantric Dīkṣā or initiation, the would-be disciple has to fast for a certain number of days, then to take a certain prescribed grain as food, and then to sleep in a certain manner. It is no wonder that his dreams are carefully studied under these circumstances in order to find out the *Mantra* that would do him the greatest good.

Food purchased from ill-gotten money is like mixing up the blood of people with one's food:

भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ।

Those acquainted with full details of *Shrāddha* rites will be aware that taking food as a representative of the dead man is not an easy job from the spiritual point of view. It has been laid down that a Brahman who has taken such food should perform the *japa* of so much *Gāyatrī* in order to be freed from the bad effects of accepting such an invitation. Similarly it is not an easy thing to accept gifts given for the propitiation of certain stars like Saturn, Rāhu and Ketu. It is like taking over the load of sin and misery from the donor on to one's own head. I have heard of a number of concrete cases involving grave consequences in such cases. It is not, however, possible to detail them here.

It has been enjoined in our religious books that we should salute our parents every morning and evening by placing our head at their feet. But when they are ailing, we are to salute them from a little distance. This is due to the subtle laws connected with personal magnetism. It is certainly an injurious habit to shake hands with people or to embrace them indiscriminately. Readers of Haggard's novel *Ayesha* will remember that as soon as the mortal Leo Vincey embraced the immortal (or highly advanced from the spiritual point of view) She or Ayesha, life was, so to say, electrified out of him. A consideration of the principle underlying this subject accounts for what is known as *Swayam Pāka* or self-cooking. The pleasures of self-cooking are a different thing altogether. Food cooked by a bad man is sure to be contaminated with the personal magnetism of the cook. It may sound ludicrous, but experiment will show how food cooked by a murderer can bring about dreams of murder in the man who partakes of that food.

A closely allied subject is that of *Dṛṣṭi-Doṣa* or the Evil-eye. It is a fact that you cannot easily digest your food if somebody has been gazing at you with greedy thoughts as you have been eating. It generally happens that cooks do not like their master's eating up a good deal of the best food cooked by them. The result is the evil eye on the part of the cook himself. You may have heard of or seen cases in which a perfectly healthy man has taken the most wholesome food, but vomitted it immediately for no ostensible reason. In fact, the reason has been as stated above. From this point of view, the safest persons who should feed you are

your mother, wife, daughter or sister. There is no fear of the evil eye in their case. Of course, there can be other relations, too; but these have been considered the most suitable. Any of these would wish that you should take as much of the best food as possible; they will be delighted if you take a little portion of their own share, too. In fact, food served by these is more invigorating and health-giving. The most important of these relations is the mother, and the fortunate ones who get their food served out by their mothers can alone realize what I mean.

It has been enjoined that some morsels of food be first offered to the fire as well as other forces of nature. This is not the place to discuss the philosophy of this subject. Suffice it to say that these offerings are a vital part of correct feeding. Failure to comply with the injunctions laid down in this connection is believed to bring about diseases and other ailments.

After all the above purification, the food that is to be eaten is to be considered a sort of *Āhuti* or offering for the sustenance of the millions of beings that constitute our human form. As a matter of fact, our morsels are nothing but an offering to the five Pranas in us—*Prāṇa*, *Apāna*, *Vyāna*, *Udāna* and *Samāna*. Or, to view, the thing from another point of view it is to be taken that the food that is being eaten is *Brahmā*, the essence thereof is *Viṣṇu*, and the consumer thereof is *Śiva*. Says the *Mantra*:—

अन्नं ब्रह्मा रसो विष्णुर्भोक्ता देवो महेश्वरः ।
एवं ध्यात्वा तु यो भुंक्ते सोऽन्नदोषैर्न लिप्यते ॥

To sum up, our food should be purchased from money which has been honestly earned by our own labour, or which is the gift of an honest and sincere man. It should be cooked either by one's self of by an individual who is pure in habit as well as thought. It should be served by a person who really wishes you well. It should be eaten in the presence of only those who cannot have the evil eye. As a matter of fact, food should be taken all alone, and one should not speak while eating. Thoughts ought to be concentrated at the time of taking food, and no thoughts connected with anger, malice or retribution ought to be allowed to affect one's mind at the time of taking food. If such ideas are allowed to take possession of you while you are eating, rest assured that the mind which will be formed as the finer substance from that food, will be affected with bad propensities, which cannot but do you harm in the long run. Have a very peaceful and kind mood at the time of eating. All efforts should be made to prevent annoying or anxiety-giving news being broken to you while you are eating. Those who are acquainted with photography know very well the care that has to be bestowed at the time of the exposure of the plate or the film. The same care is needed at the time of *Garbhādhāna* or cohabitation with the idea of progeny. And the same, too, is needed at the time of taking food. If the exposure is bad, you can certainly have no good picture after development. Similarly, if you have not taken your meals peacefully, you should not expect to have good health and sober ideas as the result thereof. As you will sow, so you shall reap.

I have, of course, not touched on subjects relating to food-hygiene, which even modern science inculcates. For instance, stale food is not good for health; too spicy food is not conducive to good

digestion; the stomach should not be filled up completely to the brim; water should be taken as little as possible while eating; eating along with anybody else in the same plate is to be avoided; food should not be taken while moving about; and common drinking vessels should never be used without thorough cleaning with earth and washing. The metal of which the utensils are made in which your food is served out, is also an important factor.

Chapter XVII of *Gītā* (Ślokas 7 to 10) gives the various natures of food and suggests means by which one may correct one's mentality by eliminations from and introductions in one's food menu.

Women and the Gita.

By Josephine Ransom.

Naturally I approach any attempt to interpret the *Gītā* with a certain amount of hesitation. There are so many orthodox and traditional views on all the points raised in this immortal book. Further, I do not, and cannot, of course, see life except as I have learnt to understand it from an occidental woman's point of view, tinctured considerably by long and continued wanderings in many countries, including a stay of several years in India.

Life has taught me that sex has been allowed to blur the whole question of the value of the individual. Men and women both are spiritual or lacking in spirituality according to the state of unfoldment of the Ego—which seemingly has no sex; both possess intellect which in women operates as intuition and in men as logic; both are emotional, the only difference here being that women usually express themselves more delicately than do men; both can be addicted to any vice or virtue—and these things are coloured only by the maleness or femaleness of the individual.

I am well aware that most of the literature of the world about women has so far been written by men, and honestly to me, a woman, the greater part of it is hugely amusing. The bulk of such opinion would have them as little else than slaves. The result is undue, unhappy and wholly unnecessary prominence given to the periodic so-called uncleanness of women. Whereas it is a cleansing as wholesome in its nature as the un-periodic cleansing of a man. Round that periodicity has gathered a veritable mountain of prohibitions and superstitions which have become an unpleasant and unwarrantable insult to the women in India.

Apparently Srī Kṛṣṇa paid no attention to the bugbear of sex differences. Arjuna puts a fundamental question (in the first chapter) when he says that if a family, a race (*Kula*) is destroyed, its traditions perish with it*—*i. e.*, the knowledge of *Dharma* is lost. Then follows *Adharma*—lack of those things which are really cultural. Upon such confusion caused by the destruction of

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* कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥
अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।

(*Gita* I. 40-41)

families follows the lawlessness of women and the destruction of the race is then certain. Here the position of both sexes as regards the preservation of the highest traditions is clearly recognized. The past has amply demonstrated it, particularly the period of the Great War both in recent and in Mahābhāratan times.

When Arjuna asks what happens to the one whose mind is distracted from *Yoga*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies that he who has thus fallen from *Yoga* is born in a pure and blessed house or is born into a family of wise Yogīs; such a birth as that is most difficult to obtain in this world.* One may, of course, argue as to which sex is indicated in the words used; but the fact remains that no distinction is made as to who are the wise Yogīs, the men or the women, or both. I prefer to think that Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His infinite wisdom would know that for such conditions the characteristics of Yogīs would be required in both parents. This quality would be even more imperative in the women than in the men, seeing that women have the training and moulding of children during all their most impressionable years. If the women were ignorant or foolish, there would be little sense in sending such unusual souls to them.

Naturally, in studying the *Gītā*, one is deeply impressed by the words of the Divine Lord when He asserts that He is seated in the hearts of all.* And more, He declares that He is both the pure and the impure, He makes no distinction. Nothing is bereft of Him. He says He is the feminine qualities and these belong to the Ego and not to the sex of the individual—fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, constancy, forgiveness.† Who would not want to have them?

Then the Lord defines demoniacal men and women. When men know neither right energy nor right abstinence; nor purity, nor even propriety, nor is there truth in them‡...regarding the gratification of desires as the highest feeling, sure that is all...given over to lust and anger—these things naturally bring them to birth in wombs (families) suited to their case. The *Karma* of both meets. The law is adjusted from both sides. There is balance and justice.

In fact, throughout the *Gītā* one is impressed by the idea that the Lord speaks to the human soul and not to persons limited temporarily by the incidence of sex. He is in all things. We should be more ready than we are to recognize that. Evils would the more rapidly disappear. The rich powers of sex would then be used to bring about a more divinely beautiful state of things, because dedicated and controlled, by both men and women.

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* शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥
अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।
एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥
(VI. 41-42)

* अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
(X. 20)

† कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥
(X. 34)

‡ प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥
(XVI. 7)

The Consummation of the Gita.

By Dasanudasa.

Srīmad Bhagavadgītā is the Divine Message of the Ever-blissful Supreme Spirit. The correct interpretation of this message is known to the Lord Himself. It is therefore but natural that we interpret it in the light of our own ideas and according to our own point of view. Being the Divine Message of the Lord Himself, the Gītā is such a unique and blessed book that from whatever angle of vision we approach it, it will ultimately lead us to the path of Devotion to the Supreme Spirit. There are already a number of commentaries on the Gītā, and different interpreters have arrived at different conclusions regarding the end in view of this wonderful book. With our humble tribute of respect to them all, without the least intention of disputing the conclusions arrived at by them, I beg to place before the readers my own views in the matter. All the various Yogas or disciplines such as 'Jñānayoga' (the Path of Knowledge), 'Dhyānayoga' (the Path of Meditation), 'Samādhiyoga' (the Path of Abstraction) and 'Karmayoga' (the Path of Action), as propounded in the Sāstras, are all worthy of being pursued and practised and have accordingly been fully dealt with in the Gītā, according as the occasion demanded; but, according to our reading of it, the consummation of the Gītā lies in surrender to the Manifest Divine, and this seems to be the main thesis of the Gītā. This conclusion is naturally arrived at by a careful study of the life of Arjuna who received the message.

Arjuna was a chummy of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa. He was one of the Lord's chosen friends and was His constant companion in every-day life. Nay, he had made the Lord the very pivot of his life. This was therefore that, without any thought of His Divinity, he treated Him as a loving and intimate friend, looked upon Him as his only ally and comrade, and had handed over to Him the reins of his chariot, nay, of his very life. Duryodhana was furnished by the Lord by way of subsidy with an enormously large army. But Arjuna was not dissatisfied in the least. He had profounder faith in the love of the Lord than in His military resources. This was what made him engage in war under the express commands of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa. But on reaching the battle-field, he forgot all about his dependence on the Lord. Once he had entered the arena of war and made ready to fight, he had no business to exercise his own judgment and to decry war as an evil. But, possessed as he was of great wisdom, Arjuna felt proud of his superior intelligence and it was therefore that he defied the commands of the Lord and refused to fight. This was Arjuna's delusion. Having relinquished dependence (निर्भरता) on the Lord, on the one hand, his mind had lost its footing and was consequently becoming unsteady, as was manifested signs of despondency on his face; while, on the other hand, his egoistic sense was asserting itself, which induced Srī Bhagavān to sound a note of warning, calling Arjuna as one who indulged in empty talk of wisdom. Srī Bhagavān reminded him thus: "What hast thou to do with this discretionary wisdom. Thou art an instrument of My Līlā (Divine Play) and shouldst remain as such even in this field of battle in obedience to My wishes." The delusion, born of an egoistic sense, which had disturbed the mental equilibrium of Arjuna could not allow him to see the truth of these words. It was therefore that Srī Bhagavān preached to him the philosophies of 'Atmajñāna' (Self-realization), 'Karma' (Action), Samādhi' (Abstraction), 'Bhakti' (Devotion) and so on. In between this discourse, as occasion permitted, Srī Bhagavān also kept on warning him. While unfolding to him a vision of His divinity, glory, power, all-pervasiveness

and comprehensive nature, Srī Bhagavān also hinted at His Divine sport. He even twitted him occasionally and frightened him. The terrible sight of His Divine destructive form sent a thrill into the body of Arjuna and his whole frame began to shake like an aspen leaf. He offered Him prayers. Yet he could not recollect the purpose of the Divine sport. After all had been said and done, Srī Bhagavān, whose heart was overflowing with love for Arjuna, pointed out in verse 64 of Chapter XVIII that all he had said before was of secondary importance as compared to what He was going to say next, which He declared was the most secret of all secrets (सर्वगुह्यतमं). He then disclosed His heart to him and called upon him directly to give himself up to Him. This episode is a beautiful illustration of the unbounded love and mercy of the Lord. When He saw that His loving companion, the instrument of His Divine sport, was seized by infatuation, due to his egoistic sense, and was consequently drifting back, forgetting the purpose of his life, He began addressing him as follows:—

"Dear, My dearest, thou hast nothing to do with the previous teachings. Realize thy true nature. Thou art My dear—My own. Remember this. In this realization lies thy well-being. Thou hast come into this world as a part of My Līlā, to fulfil My purpose. Therefore concentrate thy mind on Me. Offer thy Devotion to Me alone. Worship Me and bow to Me. I swear, thou art a part of My own being. Thou shalt come to Me. Relinquish all dependence on the various duties enumerated heretofore. Banish all thoughts regarding thy individual Dharma. Remain thou an instrument of My Divine sport and cling thou to Me alone. What hast thou got to do with good or evil? Why shouldst thou bother about them? Leave them to Me. I shall take care of them. That is My business and I shall attend to it. Thou shouldst only realize thy own nature. Fulfil the mission of thy coming into this world and My Divine sport which is going on all over this universe as thou art a mere instrument."

This was enough to awaken Arjuna's consciousness, to open his eyes, and he realized his own self in Him. "I am a mere instrument in the Divine Sport, a toy in the hands of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, and a bond-slave lying at His sweet mercy.", he recollected. The clouds of his delusion dispersed and Arjuna immediately joined the Divine Sport to play the part allotted to him. Thus the sport commenced."

No sooner did Arjuna hear these concluding words of the Lord, as mentioned in the Gītā, than he turned his back on the wisdom taught to him previously. Having given himself up to the Lord for being utilised in His Divine Sport, he freed himself of all botherations which were troubling him and in obedience to the Divine Will did everything as he was directed.

The destructive game of the Mahābhārata was over. the next scene of the drama was the Aśwamedha Sacrifice. Now that he had breathing time after his strenuous labours in the war, Arjuna felt the need of joining the 'Jñāna-Līlā' of Srī Bhagavān, the Knowledge-aspect of His Divine Sport. But he had ignored and conveniently forgotten the wisdom preached in the Gītā. Nor was it necessary for him to retain it. For he had already been initiated in the principles of Self-surrender, which Srī Bhagavān Himself calls the profoundest of all profound and sublime truths, and had made himself an instrument of his Divine sport. The Lord commenced his preparations to proceed to Dwarka for enacting another scene of His Līlā. Arjuna had now to act as an instrument of His 'Jñana-Līlā' also. Therefore, one day, he sought the presence of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa when He was all alone, and addressed Him as follows: "O Dearest, O Sportive Lord, I have come to know of Thy Greatness and all-comprehensiveness on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra. The wisdom which You were pleased to impart to me then has unfortunately slipped out of my memory. Now that You are shortly proceeding to Dwarka, please deliver that message, impart that wisdom to me once more.

My thirst for that knowledge is overpowering me." Srī Kṛṣṇa reproached him for his negligence in not having carefully retained that Knowledge in memory, adding that He had imparted that secret and eternal wisdom to him when He was established in Yoga:

श्रावितस्त्वं मया गुह्यं ज्ञापितश्च सनातनम् ।

(*Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva,* XVI. 9)

which he was afraid He could not repeat just in the same way. He might, however, give it to him in a different form. (This, however, does not mean that Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, who is All-powerful, was unable to recapitulate the wisdom once imparted: there is nothing impossible for Srī Bhagavān whose powers are unlimited and inconceivable.) The complaint of the Lord was, no doubt, just. For, even though established in the profoundest principles of शरणागति (Self-surrender), he ought to have retained in his memory the impressions of the other philosophies also, such as 'Jnānayoga', etc., also preached in the Gītā, to enable himself to participate in the ever expanding Divine sport. This was quite essential for full participation in the Divine Līlā. It was therefore that Srī Bhagavān thought fit to rebuke him. This should not, however, be taken to mean that Arjuna had allowed to pass out of his memory the sublime teaching of Self-surrender, the main thesis of the Gītā. In fact, his very life was steeped in surrender, or, in other words, it may be said that he was surrender personified. Under the charm of love and absolute surrender, he had forgotten those specific teachings of wisdom ('Jñāna') which were so essential for mankind. The Lord therefore explained the same truths to him over again in a different garb under the name "Anugītā."

In the very beginning of this later discourse Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa has used the word 'गुह्यम्', which is very significant. It shows that the Lord reproached Arjuna for having forgotten this 'गुह्य' and not the 'गुह्यतम', the most secret. It would be egregious folly to suppose from this episode of 'Anugītā' that Arjuna had fallen from the summit of wisdom or that he had forgotten the teachings of the Gītā altogether, or again, that the power of exposition and retention of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa had limitations. The gospel of surrender to the Manifest Divine is the heart and soul, the aim and purpose, the wisdom, the alpha and omega, nay, the very substance of the Gītā and Arjuna was never deluded about it. Not only in the life of which there is mention in the Gītā but in the following as well as the previous births also and in all circumstances Arjuna remained in a state of conscecration to Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa. That is why the author of the Mahābhārata does not speak of Arjuna having attained सायुज्य मुक्ति (complete immergence) which, as a matter of fact, he did not; for 'Mukti' or liberation is a superficiality for those servants of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa who participate in this Divine Līlā, since they are the highest Jñānīs and eternally liberated souls, being His own men (निज जन). Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa tells His beloved devotee Uddhava:—

न पारमेष्ठ्यं न मन्हेद्रधिष्ण्यं
न सार्वभौमं न रसाधिपत्यम् ।
न योगसिद्धीरपुनर्भवं वा
मय्यर्पितात्मेच्छति मद्विनान्यत् ॥

'Those loving devotees of Mine who have dedicated themselves to Me do not aspire even for the position of Brahmā, or the kingdom of Heaven, or sovereignty of the whole world or the kingdom of the lower ragions (Pātāla), or again Yogic powers or liberation (freedom from birth and death) in exchange for Me. In fact, why should such God-dedicated devotees who are engaged in fulfilling the purpose of Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa ever bother about liberation at all ? For so long as the devilish desire of enjoyment and liberation is there (भुक्तिमुक्तिस्पृहा यावत् पिशाची हृदि वर्तते), one cannot even think of participating in the Divine play. He is either covetous of worldly enjoyments and does not want

to part with them or seeks to run away from the world and does not want to participate in the Divine Līlā. Arjuna, however, was already an instrument in the Divine sport: only his egoistic sense had deluded him for a while. He sought to relinquish the part allotted to him by the Supreme Lord of the universe and wanted to play another part of his own choice. This delusion of his was dispelled by the Lord by communicating to him His Supreme Secret the सर्वगुह्यतम teaching of the Gītā. This restored the mental equilibrium of Arjuna. That is why, even after he had played his part in this mortal world he was seen in attendance on Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa in His Eternal Abode. It is narrated in the Mahābhārata how King Yudhiṣṭhira, who was righteousness personified, having obtained a celestial body, proceeded to those regions to which the foremost heroes of the Kaurava family had repaired, and whose glory the various gods, sages and the classes of celestial beings known as Maruts have sung. He then went to the Eternal Abode of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, where he saw Him as described below:—

ददर्श तत्र गोविन्दं ब्राह्मेण वपुषान्वितम् ।

× × ×

दीप्यमानं स्ववपुषा दिव्यैरस्त्रैरुपस्थितम् ।
चक्रप्रभृतिभिर्घोरैर्दिव्यैः पुरुषविग्रहैः ॥
उपास्यमानं वीरेण फाल्गुनेन सुवर्चसा ।
तथास्वरूपं कौन्तेयो ददर्श मधुसूदनम् ॥

(*Mahabharata, Svargarohana Parva* IV. 2—4)

What did Yudhiṣṭhira see there ? He saw that the Lord Govinda was in His Cosmic form in all its baffling splendour. He saw there beside Him His divine and terrible arms and weapons in personal forms attending on Him. The illustrious hero Arjuna, too, was occupied in serving Him. Thus Yudhiṣṭhira saw Bhagavān Madhusūdana."

From the above exposition it is clear beyond doubt that the ultimate object of the teaching of the Gītā is complete Self-surrender to the Divine in manifestation. This is the Supreme Secret which was communicated to Arjuna by Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa and this is what he understood, and his life here and his divine life in the plane above illustrates it beyond the shadow of a doubt. No one should infer from this that because Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa and His disciple Arjuna are in that Divine plane in personal forms, they are bound by them. Nay, they are boundless and infinite even though appearing in divine forms through Līl.

The Control of the Self.

Little by little let him gain tranquillity, by means of Reason (*Buddhi*) controlled by steadiness; having made the mind (*Manas*) abide in the SELF, let him not think of anything.

As often as the wavering and unsteady mind (*Manas*) goeth forth, so often reining it in, let him bring it under the control of the SELF.

(*Gītā. VI. 25-26*)

The Descent of the Divine.

By L. N. Garde.

The modern mind does not seem to yield to the idea of the Divine ever descending in humanity for its fulfilment. We are not speaking of the thorough-going materialist, the modernmost thing brought to us, of course, by a dim remote past, which rejects the very idea of the existence of God here or anywhere else. We are speaking of those moderners who believe anyhow in the existence of the Divine but whose 'up-to-date' knowledge of things debars them from admitting the possibility of a descent of the Divine in any form into humanity to help its march upward. They seem to think that the only relation that exists between man and God is that man can reach Him by his effort if he so chooses, and there ends the whole relation. Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa of the Gītā, 'lodged in human body' (मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम्) as he was, seem to them only a man with a knowledge and power of controlling men and things, acquired through a course of self-discipline and self-control. That He was the Master of Nature means to them that He had got that power of controlling nature to an extraordinary degree which any man could acquire by the self-same course of self-discipline and self-control. To entertain any idea of the possibility of the Divine descent to help man in his ascent upwards goes against all knowledge of the theory of evolution which admits only a gradual development from dead matter to living matter and from living matter to thinking matter. We propose in this article to engage, for a while, the attention of these modern minds, in order to enable them to have an intellectual approach to the fact of the Divine Descent in human ascent.

The theory of evolution is only but a half-truth and not even the essential part of it. It is a theory and not the whole truth. That matter is a mass of evolving substance from a lower to a higher and higher form, none can deny. But to think over the matter a little more deeply, one should ask himself as to what it is that impels matter to evolve into higher forms. You may call it a material force—a force in matter itself. But the force that impels matter to move and the dead matter itself are two distinct things. The law of evolution and the evolving matter are not the same thing. Matter is after all dead matter, but the impelling force cannot be said to be dead; it is living. And what is it that distinguishes the living from the dead? It is consciousness, sure enough; and, as matter is a perpetual process of change from one thing to another, the action of change being the function of a living force and the living force a consciousness, no matter can there be "anywhere really void of consciousness, for even in the atom, the cell, there is, as is now made abundantly clear in spite of itself by modern Science, a power of will, an intelligence at work." Matter then comes to be 'only a massed motion' of conscious force. Matter evolves not by itself but by a conscious force behind it. The essential part, therefore, of the theory of evolution is not that dead matter evolves into living and thence to thinking matter in human form, but that a conscious force expresses itself into this massed motion of matter in forms gradually rising from the dumb speechless bodies to speaking and thinking bodies of men.

Nor the matter having evolved into human mind, is the whole truth of evolution. Evolution of matter is only another name of an ever-changing formation into a massed motion of the conscious force behind, and Mind is not its last or the highest stage. It is evident from the function of the mind itself, which always seeks after knowledge and also a release from its own

turbulent working. It seeks knowledge and gets it; it seeks release and has it. So there is a releasing of knowledge from somewhere beyond mind, after which the human mind always aspires. Thus the human mind itself is impelled by a conscious force behind to rise upwards to a source of knowledge beyond itself.

Let us therefore supplement the theory of evolution with a recognition of a conscious force working out this evolution of matter from behind the veil, and that the human mind itself, impelled by the conscious force, is moving upward to bring in the knowledge that is behind or above mind. Once this conscious force, expressing itself into this graded form of nature, is recognized, you enter by that very recognition into the province of intellectual side-lights of the conscious Spirit behind rather than 'unconscious' form of matter outward.

The conscious force of which we speak cannot belong to matter that is by itself unconscious, rather the unconscious form of matter belongs to the conscious force of something which we call the Divine, and that conscious force of the Divine moves all matter from form to form and is the creative and all-operative force of all that is and that will be. Now what is this massed motion of matter impelled by the conscious force of the Divine? It is an expression of the Divine in Matter. The Divine expresses Himself in these graded forms of Nature. It is the Descent of the Divine into Nature. And what is this evolution of Nature from lower to higher forms? It is the ascent of Nature from matter to the Divine. Thus the truth of evolution has a double aspect—the Descent of the Divine into matter and the ascent of matter to the Divine. This is, humanly speaking, the whole truth of evolution and no part of it is complete by itself. This double aspect of the Divine expresses itself most glaringly in humanity.

Man is essentially a progressive animal fitted with a mental apparatus always receiving things unknown and applying them to the betterment of his conditions. To know is to ascend on high and to apply what has been gained from above is a descent. All human attempt at getting knowledge of whatever kind and applying it to his use is expressive of this double aspect of the Law of ascent and descent. Mind ascends to receive knowledge and knowledge descends to be received. The point is of immense importance and claims very careful attention from the reader, lest one may miss the whole significance and may not be able to follow the line of argument and the desired approach to the fact of the Descent of the Divine in humanity. All knowledge that comes to man is not due only to his effort. His effort is only to receive what is coming. To be sure, we have to realize that out of ignorance no knowledge can ever come out, as no fire can blaze out from a fireless substance, even as no doctor can heal a patient by his own effort without the aid of the healing process of nature. Ignorance simply feels itself and opens on to knowledge and knowledge enters it. This is a truth which the modern mind is apt to miss, and herein lies the turning point of his method of thought from a rational course to a reason-coated irrationalism of a most irresponible character. One should therefore be most careful not to mistake one's mind for the source of knowledge, which is always beyond mind, the mind being only an instrument of receiving it in forms of thoughts and expressing them. Necessarily, then, it follows that knowledge—an infinite knowledge of all that was and is and will be—is always there somewhere above or behind mind, and mind, in its way of seeking after it, gets from time to time a glimpse of it sufficient for the stage it has climbed up to. This is, in other words, climbing up of the Mind and coming down of knowledge—the ascent of the Mind and Descent of the Divine in His aspect of knowledge, which, we need not be told, is invariably followed by His Descent in Power and Bliss also. This is true not only of spiritual knowledge but true of all knowledge. So we see the double aspect of Descent and Ascent even in our ordinary occupations of sciences, arts and crafts, and even in our

most ordinary life, if one cares to look deeply into it. Of spiritual experiences, which are always more perfect than our mental speculations, the less said the better; for, to state frankly and submissively, we have no spiritual experience and by our selves cannot have any without the Grace of the Divine from above. We as mortal men can only feel our ignorance and weakness and powerlessness and 'aspire in faith' for the Divine Grace.

But a descent of knowledge spiritual or of whatever kind in response to the seeking aspiration and capacity of the receiving mind is not the only descent of the Divine possible in humanity. It is much more, much more than anything our modern mind is capable of conceiving. We have only tried to show that behind all this terrestrial world, behind the whole cosmic existence and behind all human effort there is the impelling force of the Divine, which gives forms to its own subtler ways of motion, and that there is nothing here or elsewhere which is not moved by the conscious force of the will of the Divine Knowledge. It is all a partial descent of the Divine. We ourselves are not all in our own mind and body and life. Our life and body and mind are only a partial reflection—a partial descent of what we really and wholly are in our Selves. It is all a partial manifestation and a gradual devolution of the spirit through matter in material form and a like gradual evolution of the Spirit-in-matter through a control of downward material pressure to its spiritual status. But this is all a partial descent of the Divine, just as all theories and ideas and scientific truths and artistic tastes and investigations and discoveries are only a partial knowledge of the One Great Truth that lies always hidden from our view and ever attracts from age to age all men towards Him through all their various seekings and aspirations. Now that One Great Truth, which is at once the source of all Knowledge and Power and Happiness, is the Ideal of humanity and that is what we call the Divine. Humanity through all its ideas seeks after the Ideal, in other words, the Divine. All human ideas soar on high for the Ideal to descend. Those who aspire thus after the Divine in themselves beyond their mind and tread steadily with faith the Path that leads to Him tell us that that path is a struggle of ascent always helped on by the descent of the Divine and that the aspirant on the path never walks all alone, his ascent being only an aspect of the descent of the Divine for him on the way upward. This kind of descent is an individual response of the Divine Grace to the effort at ascent of the aspiring seeker, and this is a matter of daily occurrence with those who are on the path. But this is, so far as humanity is concerned, only a partial descent—a part of the gradual process of a full descent of the Divine in course of time as the living Ideal of humanity.

Now those master-men who have climbed up to the highest peaks of the ascent are, to all practical purposes, the living embodiments of the Divine descent and it is for men to look up to them for a full descent of the Divine. They know the truth of all existence and the Divine purpose behind it. They are the Gurus of mankind. In them has descended the Divine to the extent they have ascended by the Divine Grace. Those who seek the Divine have to seek Him in those who by their ascent to Him have embodied His descent in themselves. It is through them that the Divine speaks to mankind, for it is in human form that humanity can see Him in descent and understand Him. The evolutionary process of this terrestrial world has culminated in human form, and humanity therefore can understand Him best in that form alone. If the Divine were to put on His form of splendour, man will be scorched to death, and, if He were to put on the form of a bird or a beast, man will not understand Him. Man can understand man and it is in man, therefore, that the Divine descends for humanity, and therefore men who by their ascent have embodied the Descent of the Divine in them are for all practical purposes the Divine themselves and therefore the living world-teachers to whom, the Gītā says, one should go and bow his

head and render all service and seek knowledge (तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया); for they are the Divine blazing fire in human form with all its purity and purifying influence that by its very nature makes all who come in contact blaze like themselves in purity and delight and knowledge and power. The greatest of all Creation is the human form and human mind and the greatest among them are those to see and understand whom is the fulfilment of the human eye and the human mind. They are the Gurus of mankind, the living embodiments of the Divine, the right leaders of men from ignorance and suffering to light and delight of the Self, the source of all that is and that shall be. They are indispensable to humanity for the knowledge of things beyond nature, for the descent of the Divine in nature, in outward manifestation. It is through them that the Divine descends in humanity which aspires for the Ideal to put on a material form. It is through the Gurus and their disciples that the Divine descends into humanity. This is the way of humanity ascending upwards to the Ideal descending into it in a perfect human form. That this ascent is full of His descent need not be repeated, though it is not His full Descent.

It is when the seekers after the Divine increase to a number sufficiently comprehensive of all types of men, and are possessed of the Divine force that descends from above on those that have climbed up the highest peaks of the ascent, always helped on by the Divine descent of the Divine Grace, and through them on those that follow these Gurus in all sincerity and one-pointed devotion to the Divine through them and through this widely and intensely organised force of the seeking disciples on the general mind of the people and the atmosphere surrounding them; and it is when this combined force of the general mind and purified atmosphere and the disciplined force of the seekers and the master-men with their eyes diametrically wide throughout the universe puts up a determined fight against the overwhelming might of all forces of evil that assail an onward march of the universe to the Ideal in the Divine, that the full descent of the Divine is made possible. Such descents of the Divine in humanity are the greatest periods and the most radical turning-points in the age-to-age history of mankind written in books or otherwise impressed in human memories. The Descent of Srī Kṛṣṇa from whose immortal nectar-lips streamed forth the celestial song of the Gītā was such a Descent in full of the Ideal in the Divine fully conforming to the stage of development the humanity had arrived.

This is Srī Kṛṣṇa—not a man grown up into the Divine but the Divine descended into a man from his very birth of human form—the unmanifest Divine Supreme Being manifesting Himself as the Divine in man, standing there in the world-arena as the leader of battles of the seekers of the Divine against the hostile forces of ignorance, as the destroyer of all that has to be destroyed and as the vision of the World-Spirit dispelling all the doubts and fears and sins and weaknesses and enacting the world-drama of establishing the Divine Law and the Divine Order over the forces that bid for power. This is Srī Kṛṣṇa in manifestation with all His unmanifest Knowledge and Power and Purpose and Ananda and Beauty manifest to those who sought and ever hidden from those who fought the Divine in Him, regarding Him only as a man 'lodged in human body'. This is Srī Kṛṣṇa the Divine, who, though unborn as the Eternal Brahma, was born as a man with complete identification with and perfect consciousness of the Reality that He was. It was the fulfilment of the ascent of humanity towards the Ideal in the Divine by full descent of the Divinity in Humanity, full to its aspiration and hope with the newer Ideal in the Divine to follow—from nature to the Divine and from the Divine to nature—from the 'Yoga' or union with the Divine to the 'Yoga' or union with the work to be done here in this plane of action (कर्मभूमि) and from the plane of action to

the plane of the Divine Blis (एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु…सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते)—the twofold way (द्विविधा निष्ठा) at once of knowledge and action (as in Srī Kṛṣṇa) cemented by a transcendent devotion. Who else could have shown this way of a Divine Harmony to humanity, if not Sri Kṛṣṇa the Divine Himself ?

Let not our ignorance mislead us to think that our life in this world has nothing to do with the Divine or that the Divine has nothing to do with this world. There can be no greater illusion or a greater tragedy than that of a disgustful conception of a universe separated from the Divine or the Divine separated from the universe.

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥

We submit therefore our mind to the spiritual fact of the Divine consciously moving by His Divine Force—the Eternal Mother-Power of all forces and energies—the whole universe to a Purpose that lies hidden in the cavern (धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितं गुहायाम्). It seems, it is only unfolded to those rarest souls who see Him everywhere (वासुदेवः सर्वमिति). To them is manifest everywhere the Divine in all forms the essential conditions of which, they say, "make up the immortal human form of Sri Kṛṣṇa who manifests Himself in that form at every epoch of the history of the individual seeker as well as of the history of the seeking mankind."

There is no outlook more hopeful nor a mental attitude more optimistic than the most rational aspiration after a Descent again in humanity of Srī Kṛṣṇa who is always present in our hearts, says the Gītā, but whom we never find. He is the Heart of our hearts and we are missing Him, and perhaps all sufferings and sorrows of the world of to-day or to-morrow can only be due to missing this Heart of the matter. All human brains put together but without the Divine support are no better than the forces of Duryodhana on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra against the Divine Charioteer of the Universe, in devising a plan for the betterment of the suffering humanity, the very suffering being a result of losing or else ignoring the heart, in pursuit of an arrogant head. The future of the battle of the divine and the undivine forces—the egoistic distortions of the Divine—is in the hands of Sri Kṛṣṇa. That the forces of ascent towards Him are not without His Grace ever descending on them, is a conclusive proof of the progressing fact of the Divine manifesting Himself again on this earth, in fullness of time and in human form to fulfil the hopes of a seeking humanity. This is for all suffering humanity with a perfect faith in the Divine, the most hopeful and the surest of foundation outlook, for the future.

The Descent of the Divine is what the world looks up to in its heart of hearts; for in the heart of hearts of us all is Srī Kṛṣṇa, says the Gītā and calls on all to take refuge in Him for the ideal happiness the world is after:—

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥

The unending Circle of Life and Death.

For certain is death for the born, and certain is birth for the dead; therefore over the inevitable thou shouldst not grieve.

(*Gita. II. 27*)

The Gita and Swarajya.

By A Mahatma.

The Vedic knowledge is classified under two heads. The one is परा, the higher, and the other is अपरा, the lower (*vide Mundakopanisad I. 4*). परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते (*Mund.* I. 5.)—"The higher is that by which the Immutable *Brahma* is reached." This higher knowledge is called *Brahmavidyā*, *Upaniṣad* or *Vedānta*. The rest of the Vedic knowledge with its several branches is called अपरा, the lower knowledge. These two branches of knowledge are found mentioned in almost all the Śāstras under different names. Along with that, the Śāstras treating of action prompted by self-interest are condemned everywhere, whereas disinterested action and *Brahmavidyā* are almost everywhere extolled, of which a bare outline is sketched below:—

"श्रेय" (the higher knowledge) is one thing and प्रेय (Ignorance) is quite another. They bind man to diverse objects of desire. Of these two, one who clings to the former becomes happy, while he who chooses the other does not attain his object (*Katha* I. ii. 1.).

"These two, which are called '*Vidyā*' and *Avidyā*, are far from and quite contradictory to each other." (*Katha.* I. ii. 4)

"The work that is done with a desire for worldly enjoyment or for enjoyment in other worlds is called out-going action (प्रवृत्त कर्म), while the work that is done with knowledge and without desire is known as the inward (निवृत्त) action" (*Manusmṛti* XII. 89).

"Men of a demoniac nature have no knowledge of the way of action and the way of abstention" (*Gītā.* XVI. 7).

"The action of the three Guṇas (qualities of nature) is the subject-matter of the Vedas; do thou become free from these Guṇas, O Arjuna."

(*Gītā* II. 45)

All these passages speak of the *Parā* and *Aparā* Knowledge under different names such as *Śreya* and *Preya*, *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*, *Nivṛtta* and *Pravṛtta*, and declare *Parā Vidyā*, the higher know-ledge, as the only means of attaining the highest Bliss. In the *Muktikopaniṣad* Bhagavān Śrī Rāma Himself speaks in very high terms of the greatness of Vedantic knowledge in his following dialogue with Māruti (Hanumān).

Māruti—Pray tell me, O Rāma, the way by which I could attain salvation.

Śrī Rāma—I am seated firmly in the Vedānta; therefore take refuge in Vedānta.

Māruti—What is to be understood by Vedānta, O Paragon of Raghus ?

Śrī Rāma—The many-branched Vedas issue from My mouth as so many breaths, and in them abides the Vedānta just as oil abides in the oil-seeds.

There are no less than 1180 branches of the Veda, and each branch gave the world an Upaniṣad of its own. So the Vedānta has filtered from the Vedas in

the shape of 1180 Upaniṣads. Of these, ten are the most important, and, if a study of these does not lead to true knowledge, one should study the 108 Upaniṣads if he is anxious to get liberated after death.

With all the high praise thus bestowed on the Upaniṣads, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who had a unique sense of time and place, was not satisfied; for men of ordinary intellect could not take a plunge into this ocean of knowledge, so that the immortalising nectar contained therein remained sealed to them. This the merciful Lord could not tolerate. He therefore made His loving devotee Arjuna an excuse for churning the unfathomable ocean of the Upaniṣads and extracted from it the nectar of the *Gītā*. Truly has it been said:—

"All the Upaniṣads are the cows and the milker is the Divine Cowherd Srī Kṛṣṇa, Pārtha (Arjuna) is the calf and the good-natured intelligent people are the enjoyers of this milk—the immortal drink of the Divine *Gītā*."

Just as the ordinary cowherd, by placing the calf before the cow, induces its maternal affection to let down its milk into the udders and thus milks it, so did the Divine Cowherd Gopāla place the Divine calf Arjuna before the divine cow in the shape of the Upaniṣads and extract the divine milk for all who long for a plunge in the supreme felicity of Divine Bliss.

Thus descended the Divine Mother, the *Gītā*, into this world. Of its greatness, suffice it to say that only Śrī Kṛṣṇa knows it perfectly, or, in the words of Goswami Tulasidas, "He alone knows it to whom He is pleased to reveal the truth of it, and he who knows it becomes one with Him."

The greatness of the Vedas is of a nature that surpasses all human understanding, and even the Godlike master-men find themselves at a loss to grasp their true meaning (मुह्यन्ति यत्सूरयः). But still greater in importance are the Upaniṣads, which abide in the Vedas as the oil abides in the oil-seeds, as their very essence. Still greater is the value of the *Gītā*, which is the very cream of these Upaniṣads. How can the generality of people, engrossed in their earthly nature, be able to visualise so easily that great and greater and still greater importance of the *Gītā*? It is unseizable, still the way that she points out for the attainment of the Divine is the easiest:—

प्रारब्धं भुज्यमानो हि गीताभ्यासरतः सदा ।
स मुक्तः स सुखी लोके कर्मणा नोपलिप्यते ॥

"Liberated and happy is he who is content with his lot, taking it as the result of his past actions, and is always engaged in studying and acting up to the *Gītā*, and he in this world is never entangled in any work—is unattached."

We have nothing to leave, nothing to lose, have only to try incessantly to live in the *Gītā* with a calm acceptance of the result of the past actions, and have the liberation in the palm of our hand. This is the chief aim and purpose of the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* fits a man for the field of action, scares away all cowardliness, negligence, sloth and weakness. The very example of Arjuna is sufficient proof of this. The deluded Arjuna who at the commencement of the battle refused to fight (न योत्स्ये) is awakened by the *Gītā* to a sense of his duty and says to the Lord "I shall do what Thou biddest me to do." This, then, is the trans-

Warrior Shri Krishna.

forming power of the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* teaches us to act and yet to get out of the cycle of birth and death (पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणम्). This is the advance made by the *Gītā* on the Upaniṣads. The *Gītā* explains the matter more fully from Ślokas 7 to 13 of Chapter V. The *Gītā* is undoubtedly the essence of the Upaniṣads. But it also embraces the truths of other Śāstras as well and is therefore rightly called सर्वशास्त्रमयी (embodying the essence of all Śāstras). The author of the *Mahābhārata* is therefore quite correct when he proclaims: "Study and practise the *Gītā* well and have nothing to do with other Śāstras."

गीता सुगीता कर्तव्या किमन्यैः शास्त्रविस्तरैः ।

One more important fact about the *Gītā* is that it entertains no partiality of any kind and has thus won the admiration and respect of the whole world.

गीतासु न विशेषोऽस्ति जनेषूच्चावचेषु च ।
ज्ञानेष्वेव समग्रेषु समा ब्रह्मस्वरूपिणी ॥

(*Gita-Mahatmya*)

"In the *Gītā* there is no distinction of class and rank; to all knowledge it stands equal as the *Brahma* itself."

The *Gītā* says:—

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥

(Gita IX. 30)

"Even if a man of despicable conduct turns to Me with exclusive devotion, he must be regarded as a saint, for the settled will of endeavour in him is right and complete will."

स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥

(IX. 32)

"Even womanfolk, Vaiśyas and Śūdras (those belonging to the mercantile and labouring classes) reach the highest destination."

The *Gītā* makes no distinction of class and rank so far as devotion to God is concerned. Whoever studies and practises the *Gītā* can attain salvation. This liberation, the highest destination of man, is to the awakened man the real *Swarājya* or freedom, the ultimate consummation of his human life. It seems necessary, therefore, to say something about this *Swarājya*, which is linked with all knowledge.

'Swa' or Self is the Divine Self in you, in me and in all, while '*Rājya*' means power. The word "Self" is used in two senses. It denotes the individual self as well as the Universal Self which pervades and transcends all existences. In a still higher consciousness the two are one and there is nothing between that could separate them. They are like all-enveloping ether and ether enclosed in the four walls of a house. The Self of the Cosmic body is God and it is He who manifests Himself as the Ego in individual bodies. But after a discriminatory understanding of the great dictum 'तत्त्वमसि' (Thou art that) and other important maxims, all knowledge filters down to the fact of Oneness of the Self with the Supreme Spirit, and this oneness constitutes the real *Swarājya*. And this *Swarājya* has the sanction of the Śāstras:

सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
समं पश्यन्नात्मयाजी स्वाराज्यमधिगच्छति ॥

(Manu XII. 91)

"One who seeks after the Divine Self and offers all to Him, who sees himself in all existences and all existences in himself and thus has an equal mind and equal eye—such a seeker after the Divine attains the *Swārājya* or the kingdom of Heaven."

"One who sees all existences within himself and himself in all existences does not speak ill of anyone." (*Yajurveda* XL. 6)

"When one knows the reality and is enabled to see all existences as himself, what ignorance or grief can there be to him who sees none but One ?" (*Yajurveda* XL.7)

"He has his Self extended everywhere" (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka* V. 14)

"All this is *Brahma*; the very Self is *Brahma*. (*Māṇḍūkya*, 2)

One who sees all existences abiding in the Self and the Self as abiding in all attains Swarajya in the shape of oneness of the Self, and is thus rid of all grief, ignorance and delusion and lives in perfect peace. Peace is there and not elsewhere. The Mother *Śruti* herself loudly proclaims that "their is the everlasting peace and not of others" (तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषाम्). This is what all the Śāstras proclaim with one voice. "Learning of the four Vedas and all the eighteen Smṛtis is a fruitless labour," says Śrī Śankarāchārya, "if the Self within is not found". If the highest truth remains still hidden, all the learning of the Śāstras is vain; and when the highest truth is found, what use is there of all this learning?"

How long will you remain stationed in these stages on the wayside with your bag and baggage ? Go home and be comforted. Do not be tempted by the seemingly attractive things that come before you at these stands. Do not regard the rule other than that of your Self as autonomy or *Swarājya*. How can that which shall have to be relinpuished one day be your *Swarājya* ? There is no rule, no sovereignty here in this world nor in the higher regions, even to the sovereignty of the triple world, where one could establish himself for all time. Those who established their ruling authority found themselves in the end deprived of all that they seemed to possess. What a fitting epitaph was the utterance of Bhoja on these worldly kingdoms and possessions when he addressed the following lines to Muñja, the then reigning king:—

"Gone is King Māndhātā, who was the glory of Kṛtayuga (the Golden Age). Yudhiṣṭhira and other kings are all gone to the other world. None of them did this earth follow, O Muñja; but it will follow thee forsooth."

All this shows that the realization of the Self is the real attainment of *Swarājya*. That is the real and "the Great Government" (महाशासन) before which, says Aṣṭāvakra, "even the sovereignty of the triple world loses all its relish."

Such a *Swarājya* has the support of the *Gītā*:—

"My abode is that highest place whence, once having reached it, no one is compelled to return to this mortal world."

(Gita XV.6)

"He who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, to him I do not get lost nor does he get lost to Me. Whoever adores God in all, being seated in the divine oneness, however he lives and acts, he lives in Me."

(*Gita* VI. 30-31)

"I am the Self of all existences, seated in their hearts; and I am their beginning, their middle and their end."

(*Gita* X. 20)

"The Lord is seated equally in all existences, Imperishable in things that perish. He sees who sees That."

(*Gita* XIII. 27)

"He who sees the Lord dwelling equally in all places and things and events, does not kill his Self by the Self and goes by that way to the highest destination"

(*Gita* XIII. 28)

"The man whose delight is in the Self and who is content in the Self, for him there exists no work that needs to be done.

(*Gita* III. 17)

"The great soul that sees all this as Vāsudeva is the rarest."

(*Gita* VII. 17)

"That which is night to earth-bound creatures is to the Self-mastering sage his waking, and that in which these creatures are awake he looks upon as night."

(*Gita* II. 69)

To find, and, be in union with, the Divine despite all that is seen and sensed, is what we call the highest status, the highest destination, the ultimate goal, the supreme abode, the completest liberation and everlasting *Swarājya.*

Let us therefore be quick and make the necessary attempt to get this everlasting *Swarājya.*

"Having got into this transitory world of suffering, give up yourself to Me."

(*Gita.* IX. 33)

"Arise, awake, go to the men of knowledge and get knowledge from them. The way, the wise say, is as narrow and difficult to tread as a sharpened razor's edge."

(*Katha.* III. 14)

Therefore, O Being, arise, awake from this torpid slumber and, with your intelligent will as the charioteer, mind as the bridle and the senses as the horses, drive this chariot of your physical form towards your home.

The Light of Wisdom.

Even if thou art the most sinful of all sinners, yet shalt thou cross over all sin by the raft of wisdom.

As the burning fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so doth the fire of wisdom reduce all actions to ashes.

Verily there is no purifier in this world like wisdom; he that is perfected in *Yoga* finds it in the SELF in due season.

(*Gītā IV. 36-38*)

The Gita and Western Mysticism.

By Sivadas Budhiraja.

Mysticism, whether of the East or of the West, proceeds, generally speaking, on an assumption that the world of Form and Colour, with which a "Normal" man is so familiar, is a "Cave of illusion", a land of 'Duḥkha' (sorrow); and it asserts that the only way to get real and true happiness and joy is, in the first instance, to beat a retreat from it, the object being to reach the suprasensible plane of Reality—"The Supreme Abode" of the Gita."

Not only is the goal one and the same; the means and methods adopted by Mysticism, whether in the East or in the West, are nearly identical. Western Mysticism postulates three traditional stages for reaching the goal, namely, (1) Purgation, (2) Illumination and (3) Union.

Mysticism of the East as reflected in the Gītā has also its three stages of (1) Brahmabhūta, (2) Brahma-Saṃspṛṣṭa and (3) Brahma-Saṃstha.

A comparative study of the stages as respectively laid down by the Mystics of the East and of the West reveals not only their fundamental identity in methods and processes but also shows verbal identity in expressions used in describing the experience gained by a Mystic. Take for instance Sloka 28 of Chapter VI of the Gītā, which avowedly deals with 'Dhyāna-yoga' (the Mystic way). In translation it runs:—"The Yogī (Mystic) who is free from sin, who constantly thus practises Yoga, easily enjoys contact with Brahma (Brahma-Saṃsparśa)—(which is) transcendental joy."* We in the East do not possess any detailed accounts of the experiences of the Mystics—as no records are made by them of their experiences. Anyone reading this Sloka is hardly able to grasp the significance of the two expressions (1)Brahma-Saṃsparśa and (2) Transcendental happiness or joy. But, if we turn to the accounts given by Mystics of the West, a flood of light is thrown on the nature of the experience so succintly recorded in this Sloka. What does this touch with the Absolute mean ? Scaramelli says (vide Tr. 3, No. 24):—"As the human body touches another body and is touched by it again, as it thus feels the other's presence and this sometimes with enjoyment, so the soul touches a spiritual substance and is touched by it again and feels the presence with the sensation that pertains to pure spirit and this *sometimes with great delight,* for example, when it is God who touches her and is present to her."

In this practice of "sense of presence of God", which is the main characteristic of the illuminative stage, "the spirit stretching towards God" declares that it has touched Him, and its normal condition henceforth is an acute and joyous consciousness of His Presence with "many Privy Touchings of sweet spiritual sights and feeling" (Julian of Norwich: "Revelations" Chap. XLIII).

In Hugh of St. Victor's Mystical Tract "De Arrha Animal", there is a fragment of a Dialogue between the Soul and Self, which describes this experience of touch with the Absolute. The Soul says:—

"Tell me what can be this thing of Delight that merely by its memory *touches* and moves me with such sweetness and violence that I am drawn out of myself and carried away I know not how. I am suddenly renewed; I am changed; I am plunged into an ineffable Peace. My mind is full of gladness. All my past wretchedness and pain is forgot. My soul exults, my intellect is illuminated,

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* युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥

my heart is afire; my desires have become kindly and gentle: I know not where I am, because my Love *has embraced* me.

"Also because my Love has embraced me, I seem to have become possessed of something; and I know not what it is but I try to keep it, *that I may never lose it*. My soul *strives in gladness* that she may not be separated from that which she desires to hold fast for ever, as if she had found in it the goal of all her desires. She exults in a sovereign and ineffable manner, seeking nought, desiring not but to rest in this. Is *this* then my Beloved ? Tell me that I may know Him and that, if He come again, I may entreat Him to leave me not but to stay with me for ever."

The Self says:—

"It is, indeed, thy beloved who visits thee; but he comes in an invisible shape. He comes disguised. He comes incomprehensibly. He comes to *touch* thee, not to be seen of thee; to arouse thee, not to be comprehended of thee. He comes not to give Himself wholly but to be tasted of thee; not to fulfil thy desire but to lead upwards thy affection."

The Mystic is touched, not only touched but he is also magnetised. He is transfigured. He now sees the visible world in a different way.

Summing up his Review of "the Illuminative stage", Evelyn Underhill in the book "Mysticism" says:—

"This serene and illuminated consciousness, which we have been studying in this chapter, is at its best a state of fine equilibrium, a sane adjustment of the Inner and outer life. By the synthesis of Love and will, which is the secret of the heart, *the whole world is seen and known in God and God is seen and known in the whole world*; it is a state of exalted emotion." Centuries before, the author of the Gītā summed up and defined this illuminative stage, whose main characteristic is "touch with the Brahma", in a similar way, in Sloka 29 of Chapter VI:—"He who has devoted himself to Yoga, who looks alike upon all, *sees himself existing in all beings and all beings in the Self*."* But this illuminative stage is not a permanent one, it lasts for some time and then disappears. The Mystic is found in apprehension lest it be lost. That is why the soul in the quotation given above from Hugh of St. Victor's Mystical Tract cries out, "I try to keep it, *that I may never lose it*." "Tell me that I may know Him and that, if He come again I may entreat him to leave me *not, but to stay with me for ever*."

The dread is a real one; for a study of the Western Mysticism establishes that, before the unitive state is arrived at, there supervenes what is called Dark Night of the soul or Mystic Death—in which there is complete absence of God. A complete sense of Privation, resulting from the withdrawal of God, stupefies the aspirant. The Mystic experiences in this Dark Night of the soul a sense of sin, loss of the self's old passion, peace and joy. There is a relapse to lower spiritual and mental levels. Hence Srī Kṛṣṇa gives the assurance in Sloka 30 of Chapter VI.:—

"He who sees Me everywhere and also sees all in Me, *I am never lost to him and he is never lost to me*."‡ But for an assurance of the kind, the aspirant of the unitive state may give up the struggle and be lost, as the Gītā says, like a broken cloud.

This "Dark night of the soul" is an actual falling away and is represented in the Gītā in the "Yoga-bhraṣṭa" described in Slokas 37 and 38 of Chap. VI. It is a stage which intervenes

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* सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

‡ यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥

between the "illuminative" and unitive states. The Western Mystics affirm that, though it may last for very long, it ultimately gets dissolved and then the Mystic reaches the goal. But a pertinent question arises: What becomes of a "Yogabhraṣṭa", if he dies when the Dark Night of the soul is on ?

Western Mysticism does not concern itself with this aspect of the question, probably because it does not believe in Rebirth. To the author of the Gītā, however, the question was an all-important one, and he has answered it in Sloka 40—45 of Chapter VI. A "Yogabhraṣṭa", he says, is reborn with the momentum of his previous life-efforts and recovers contact with the Buddhi which belonged to him in his former life (Sloka 43 of Chapter VI). He is then led on by his former practice and, having transcended the illuminative stage,—which is represented by *Sabda-Brahma* (Sloka 44) in the Gītā, as auditions according to Western Mysticism are a characteristic of this stage,—he then puts forth strenuous and earnest endeavour to reach the unitive life which is described in Slokas 31 and 32 of Chapter VI as being "Established in oneness", which corresponds to the "Oneness in the Absolute" of Western Mysticism. Ruysbrock, one of the greatest Mystics of the West, says:—"When one is established in Oneness, he dwells in God and yet he goes out towards created things *in a spirit of love towards all things, and this is the supreme summit of his inner life.*" The author of the Gītā predicates the same thing of such a one in Sloka 32 of Chapter VI. At other places he describes this condition at greater length and calls this state of being established in oneness as being established in Brahma ('Brāhmī sthiti'), which finds a sublime expression in the celebrated Slokas 17—20 of Chapter V. In Slokas 24—26 of Chapter V he calls the unitive life as Brahma-Nirvāṇa or "Nirvāṇa established in Me"—vide Sloka 15 of Chapter VI and Sloka 72 of Chapter II.

Now this Brahma-consciousness is not that which lives secret within us but *the Brahma-consciousness in which we live. By living in that Self we live in all and no longer in our egoistic being alone;* by oneness with that Self a steadfast oneness with all in the universe becomes the very nature of our being and the root status of our active consciousness and root motive of all our action. We now see the beautiful sequence of Slokas 28—32 of Chapter VI. The first three Slokas describe "Illumination" and the other two describe (though very briefly) the "Unitive Life". Incidentally we also realize how wide of the mark is the criticism of men like Professor Garbe who consider these Slokas as interpolations !!!

Let us now study "the Purgative way" as laid down by the Mysticism of the West and the Gītā and see whether it is also identical in both. Evelyn Underhill represents Purgation (vide page 246 of "Mysticism") as the "drastic turning of the self from the unreal to the real life: a setting of her house in order, an orientation of the mind to Truth. Its business is the getting rid first of self-love, and secondly of all those foolish interests in which the surface-consciousness is steeped." He then divides or splits it into two aspects: (1) The Negative aspect, the stripping away or removing of those superfluous, unreal and harmful things which dissipate the precious energies of the Self: this is the business of Detachment; (2) the Positive aspect: a raising to the highest term—their purest state—of all that remains of the permanent elements of character. This is brought about by mortification—the gymnastic of the soul—a deliberate recourse to painful experiences and difficult tasks.

Detachment, according to Western Mysticism, consists in:—

(1) Poverty, i. e., an utter self-stripping—the casting off of immaterial as well as material wealth, a complete detachment from all finite things. Poverty is not absence of things; for absence is not detachment if the desire remains: it is that detachment which consists in sup-

pressing desire and avoiding pleasure. The exact parallel word used by the Gītā is 'Asakti', i.e., non-attachment or Detachment, and it is defined in many places in the Gītā. It is defined in Sloka 4 of Chapter VI, where it is said:—"When one does not get attached either to the objects of senses or to works, and when one renounces all Saṃkalpas (desires)."* Again, in Sloka 9 of Chapter XIII it is said:—"Non-attachment, non-identification of one's self with regard to son, wife and home, and the rest."‡

A Western Mystic says:—

"That thou mayest have pleasure in everything, seek pleasure in nothing; that thou mayest possess all things, seek to possess nothing. In detachment the spirit finds quiet in *coveting* nothing." This is represented by Aparigraha in Sloka 10 of Chapter VI, which is apparently founded in verse 1 of Iśopaniṣad.

Detachment or Asakti is finally summed up in the second half of Sloka 51 of Chapter XVIII: "Abstaining from sound and other objects of sense and casting off attachment and aversion."§

(2) Chastity—This is represented in Sloka 14 of Chapter VI: "Observing well the vow of abstinence and celibacy" (ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः).

(3) Obedience—the poverty of will, which is represented by 'Prasannātmā' of the same Sloka 14 of Chapter VI). Detachment, therefore, is well-expressed in "Nought I am, not I have, nought I lack."

II. THE POSITIVE ASPECT OF PURGATION, OR MORTIFICATION.

"Mortification", says Underhill, ("Mysticism", page 265) "is rendered necessary not because the legitimate exercise of the senses is opposed to Divine Reality, but because these senses have usurped a place beyond their station. The senses have grown stronger than their masters, monopolised the field of perception, dominated an organism which was made for greater activities and built up those barriers of individuality which must one and all be done away with before the subject can fulfil its destiny and pass over into the boundless life of the One". The death of selfhood is then the primary object of Mortification. But the loathsome ordeals and gruesome practices of which we have detailed accounts in the lives of the saints show the excess to which ascetism went in practising torture and pain.

Tapas in India also involved some extreme practices, but it was the great virtue of Buddhism that it once and for all time raised it to a higher level. The Gītā also raised its voice against the extreme forms of ascetism—vide Slokas 5 and 6 of Chapter XVII, and defined what (1) 'Tapas' of the body, (2) 'Tapas' of the tongue, and (3) 'Tapas' of the Mind was, in Slokas 14, 15 and 16 of Chapter XVII. This was summed up when defining 'Brahma-bhūta'-vide stanza 52 of Chapter XVIII: "with speech, body and mind under full control" (यतवाक्कायमानसः). Asceticism was denounced by the Buddha and it forms no part of the Mystic way as propounded by the Gītā, though Western Mysticism yet swore by it.

Purgation is grandly summed up in Slokas 51—53 of Chapter XVIII, which define what 'Brahmabhūta' means. No better description of the Purgative state could be conceived. 'Brahmabhūta' was therefore Purged Self. Purgation is the preliminary step in the Mystic way, illumination is the last but one stage, and unitive life is the climax. But how are illumination and unitive life gained, what are the processes which are required to be gone through? Underhill in "Mysticism", page 109, says:—"It is one of the indirect testimonies to the objective reality of Mysticism that the *stages of*

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* यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसङ्कल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥

‡ असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।

§ शब्दादीन् विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥

this road, the psychology of the spiritual ascent as described to us by different schools of contemplatives, always present practically *the same sequence of states.* The psychologist finds little difficulty, for instance, in reconciling the "Degrees of Orison" described by St. Teresa:—(1) Recollection, (2) Quiet, (3) Union, (4) Ecstasy, (5) Rapt, (6) the pain of God and (7) the spiritual marriage of the soul—with the four forms of contemplation enumerated by St. Hugh of Victor or the Sufis' 'seven stages" of the soul's ascent to God, which begin in adoration and end in spiritual marriage. Though each wayfarer may choose different landmarks, it is clear from their comparison *that the Road is one.* To this we can add our testimony by refering to the steps laid down in the Gītā—vide Sloka 39—72 of Chapter II, which describe Buddhiyoga. The steps are:—

(1) Sraddhā, (2) Vyavasāya, (3) Smṛti, (4) Samādhi, (5) Prajñā, (6) Prasāda and (7) Brahma-Nirvāṇa, which we have described above. It is a strange coincidence that whilst St. Teresa calls a process "Recollection", the Gītā uses the word "Smṛti"—"Sati" of the Buddhists. It is its exact equivalent. "Smṛti" ordinarily means memory and so does Recollection. Underhill ("Mysticism", page 375) says:—"The unfortunate word 'recollection', which the hasty reader is apt to connect with 'remembrance', is the traditional term by which Mystical writers define just such a voluntary concentration, such a first collecting or gathering in of the attention of the self to its 'most hidden cell.' The state of 'Recollection', as a rule, begins in the practice of meditation, *i. e.,* deliberate consideration of and dwelling upon some one Aspect of Reality." Rāmānuja has also defined it as "Meditation" in his Srī Bhāṣya. It is a preliminary to Samādhi. We need not enter into a detailed comparison; it is enough to say that the Road is one and the same, the landmarks are the same, and the goal is the same.

Underhill, however, observes as to the goal (Page 520):—"The tendency of Indian Mysticism in regard to the unitive life wholly in its passive aspect, as a total self-annihilation, a disappearance into the substance of the Godhead,results, I believe, from such a one-sided distortion of truth.

"The oriental Mystic passes on to lose his life upon the heights, but he does not come back from the grave and bring to his fellow-men the life-giving news that he has transcended mortality in the interests of the race. The temperamental bias of Western Mystics towards activity has saved them, as a rule, from such one-sided achievement."

This estimate of Eastern or Indian Mysticism is far from correct so far as the Mysticism of the Gītā is concerned, as we have already shown above when describing Brahama—Nirvāṇa. In fact, it falls to the ground when we bear in mind the summing up of the 'Gītā' in almost all chapters. See specially Sloka 55 of Chapter XI: "Who does every work for Me, who has Me for his supreme object, who is devoted to Me, who is free from attachment, who is without enmity towards all beings, he comes to Me, O Pāṇḍava."

Who does not take refuge in God ?

The evil-doing, the deluded, the vilest men, they come not to Me,–they whose wisdom is destroyed by illusion (*Māyā*), who have embraced the nature of demons (Asuras, the opponents of the Suras, or gods).

(*Gītā. VII. 15*)

Gita-Jayanti.

By Sophia Wadia.

It is computed that Mokṣadā Ekādaśī—the Eleventh Day of Mārga Śīrsa, which is auspicious to those seeking spiritual realization—was the day when Śrī Kṛṣṇa began delivering on the field of duty His Sermon to the mentally confused Arjuna. Therefore that day is regarded as the birthday of the *Gītā.* Very many Hindus celebrate this day—Gītā-Jayantī. Only a few years ago the festival was inaugurated. The *Bhagavadgītā* is reverenced as the Song of Life, and its reciters and readers are said to attain fortune, victory, prosperity and righteousness. That its doctrines emancipate the human Soul and enlighten it with Wisdom and Peace is a well-recognized fact. The question which interests some lovers of India is—can this day be utilized in the service of the country as a whole, as a unit? Has the *Gītā* the power to emancipate the Indian people, to elevate them to a status of enlightenment and victory? Are its teachings such that men and women who are not Hindus by birth, and who belong to and follow their own religious creeds, can use them without doing any violence to their own consciences and minds? For, if that be so, then Gītā-Jayantī should become an Indian and not only a Hindu celebration.

The Eternal Struggle.

The message of the *Gītā* has a universal appeal. Its teachings are fundamentally psychological and practical; they are addressed to man, the thinker, from whom no blind belief in them is demanded, but whose reason is kindled into conviction. The *Gītā* is a drama; its characters are human passions and principles in Nature—personified. Its historical background and martial 'melange' have misled some, but more and more is it being recognized that the *Gītā* symbolizes the eternal struggle between the material and the spiritual in every human being. Any thinking individual is capable of recognizing that the story of the *Gītā* is the story of life: it deals with the problems of good and evil, of delusions and illusions, of rights and duties, of the demoniac and the divine, of emancipation from falsehood and ugliness, and of the enlightenment of truth and beauty. The more one listens to the Song of Life, the more one realizes that it is the Song of his own life. Thus the *Gītā* is understood by each thinking Soul in his own way, according to his own stage in evolution. To each the *Gītā* offers the solution of his own problems. Thus, any deluded mortal of any community using the lessons taught can become enlightened and immortal.

The Book of Democracy.

The *Gītā* has not only a universal appeal; its influence is universalizing. It may be regarded as the Book of Democracy: it teaches that Spirit is the seed of all, and in the hearts of all beings it is rooted. At the time of its promulgation women, Vaiśyas and Śūdras were looked down upon; but Kṛṣṇa says that they also can tread the highest path and attain the highest state. Not only the virtuous and the

wise can receive its aid, but the deluded and the ignoble can cross over all sins in the bark of its spiritual knowledge. But the pure democratic doctrines of the *Gītā* do not advocate any process of levelling down all human beings to an equality in material things; they advocate the realization of an existing unity in Spirit, which manifests as harmony of diversities. The socialism of the *Gītā* is founded on the maxim of *noblesse oblige* and the method of attaining it is by the unfoldment of nobility at every stage and in every station of life. The social philosophy of the *Gītā* recognizes the divisions and differences of the human kingdom and it does not attempt the impossible task of doing away with or ignoring them; it teaches their meaning and purpose, and reveals that they are but the results of the natural processes of evolution. Thus, for example, the *Gītā* does not say that castes and classes are useless and should be destroyed; it explains Varṇas or castes from the point of view of the Soul; they are expressions of the varying qualities of the evolving human consciousness. By merit and merit alone a man is of high or low caste or class: birth, family, religion or wealth do not determine the Soul's station in life; its own qualities bespeak its stage of evolution. By self-control and self-effort any sinner can become pure.

The Real Swaraj.

The inspiration of the *Gītā* produces a series of progressive awakenings, but all of them result in Reliance on the Self within, which is perceived as the Inner Ruler. No prophet, no priest can save that Self; no king, no emperor can have power over it. It is its own saviour and holds sway over its own kingdom of the mind, its own empire of the heart. Thus the *Gītā* destroys priest-made orthodoxy and sectarianism but does not leave the man barren and lonely; for, it brings to him the companionship of the Sage and the Prophet. It illuminates for the Muslim his Koran, for the Parsi his Avesta, for the Christian his Bible. These are no more regarded as infallible books but as avenues leading to the understanding and appreciation of their great recorders. For example, the teaching about *Śraddhā* will purify and deepen the faith of the Muslim; the austerities and mortifications of body, speech and mind, will make the Zoroastrian more enlightened about the triad of good deeds, good words and good thoughts which he reveres; the Sikh's martial ardour, the Jain's gentleness, will become more elevated qualities; the Christian will learn why ordinarily he is not able to live up to the Sermon on the Mount, and by what stages he can reach the position where he will be able to do so; and so on. That which is the force of evil in every religion will weaken, and the unifying spirit of true religion will become more and more manifest.

A Unifying Force.

The principle of democracy in which each grade of intelligence has its duties to discharge contributes substantially to the unfoldment of the quality of self-reliance. The philosophy of the *Gītā* is the philosophy of responsibility to neighbour and stranger, to country and race, to the whole of Nature, visible and invisible; its practice resolves itself into the Religion of Duty. The performance of duties requires a discernment of what are *not* our duties; otherwise, like Arjuna, we shall want to run away from our real duty, thinking that it consists in giving way to the enemy within and making peace with the wrong-doer in the world. To-day Indians are divided into different camps and communities because of what each class regards as its duty; the

objection does not inhere in the existence of classes and communities, each of which is composed of men and women, weak and virtuous, ignorant and educated; the objection inheres in that which is conceived to be their duty by each of these classes and communities. Each assumes responsibilities through a mistaken sense of duty, and the result is that their loyalty to sect makes them disloyal to the country; their fidelity to religion makes them faithless to the human race; their acceptance of revealed books made by men blinds them to the true Revelation of Nature, and they forfeit the company of prophets by blindly following their priests. The *Gītā* has a unifying force; that power can bind men and women of different religions into a single whole: for, he who practises self-control, who attempts purification of his own thoughts, words and deeds, who endeavours to live his days and years in any enlightened manner comes in unison and harmony, unconsciously to himself, with all others who are engaged in the same task.

To make the celebration of "Gītā-Jayantī" an Indian institution we must first restore the book to its original position, from which it has fallen to assume a sectarian character. It is not a religious code but a spiritual poem; its teachings, both metaphysical and ethical, have naught to do with religious rites, priests or temples: it is not other-worldly—it deals with the problems of life in this world. Its message is clear, its language is simple, and no man needs an intermediary to approach it or to appreciate it. It is not fragmentary and there are no lacunae to be filled up by some expounder or by some study of other texts. The many commentaries written on it are more a hindrance than a help, and they tend to take the *Gītā* away from its original position of a book for all men. It itself is perfectly rounded off; in itself it is complete. It grades off gently to depth after depth in the mighty ocean of Wisdom. It rises tier over tier like an awe-inspiring mountain. Any man, any woman, in the East as in the West, can find his or her own place in its scheme, the very next step to be taken by him, the way to take that step, and the way to keep on progressing.

A Book For All Humanity.

The main difficulty in according the *Gītā* its real place as a book for all humanity is raised by those Hindus who proclaim it as only a Hindu religious text. Anyone experienced in human psychology would understand that men and women of other communities are in a better position to understand the message of the *Gītā* as they are more likely to bring to the book a mind and a heart free from the bias of inherited religious traditional beliefs. The right approach to the *Gītā* consists in having our mind fresh to penetrate its verses. The effect is magical. The following quotation proves the point; it is from the pen of a foreigner who approached the *Gītā* with a fresh mind. If an occidental of a hundred years ago could be uplifted by the power and the inspiration of the *Gītā*, surely it is easily possible for any oriental, though he be not a Hindu, to be benefited in a similar manner. Here are the words of A. W. von Schlegel, the German poet and critic who rendered the *Gītā* into Latin in 1823:—

"By the Brahmins, reverence of masters is considered the most sacred of duties. Thee, therefore, first, most holy prophet, interpreter of the Deity, by whatever name thou wast called among mortals, the author of this poem, by whose oracles the mind is rapt with ineffable delight to doctrines lofty, eternal and divine,—thee first, I say, I hail, and shall always worship at thy feet.

Uniqueness of The Gita.

By Raghunandan Prasad Sinha.

The ancient belief was that (a) all actions had a binding effect and must, therefore, be shunned except those for bodily needs; (b) that *Yajña* was mere ritualistic sacrifices; (c) that *Tapasyā* meant austerities of the body; (d) that *Yoga* consisted in development of psychic powers by means of exercises, mostly physical; (e) that *Bhakti* or devotion to the Supreme can be obtained only after retirement from worldly activities; and (f) that adoption of the fourth *Āśrama* called *Sannyāsa* alone can confer salvation. In *Mahābhārata* there is record of a discussion between a female ascetic and King Janaka in which the former maintained that only asceticism as opposed to household life can confer divine knowledge or *Mokṣa*, while the latter held that the above can be obtained even while leading household life. The discussion seems to end in victory of the former, inasmuch as the last argument advanced by her was not answered by the king. In the *Bhagavadgītā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave an entirely new interpretation to these beliefs. In past ages life of man was very very long, hence spiritual practices extending over thousands of years did not matter; but in *Kaliyuga*, man's life-span being limited to 100 or 120 years, such long practices were out of question. It was also for this reason that the Lord expounded in the *Gītā*, for the benefit of mankind, such precepts and practices as did not require either a long length of time for their execution or the practice of asceticism. Therefore His chief disciples were not recluses but householders, such as Gopīs of Vraja, Arjuna, Uddhava, Akrūra and such others.

Yajna.

According to the *Gītā* the entire manifestation is the result of *Yajña* (sacrifice) of Prajāpati (Lord of the creation)—*vide* III. 10, an unlimited and unbounded Being. This sacrifice consisted in His imposing limitation upon Himself by vieling Himself with His *Yogamāyā* (root matter)—*vide* VII. 25. Thus mutual sacrifices became the law of Nature, which alone can satisfy really the living beings by meeting their needs (III. 10). Thus those without sacrifice cannot prosper even in this mundane world, not to speak of the other worlds (IV. 31). The chief sacrifices are the five daily obligatory supreme sacrifices called 'पञ्च महायज्ञ', meant as sacrifices to Ṛṣis, Devas, Pitṛs, Humanity and the animal kingdom. The *Gītā* emphasises sacrifice to Devas, by way of illustration (III. 11). Control of senses, Prāṇas and Mind, charity and study of scriptures are finer forms of sacrifices (IV. 26—30). But higher than these is wisdom-sacrifice or ज्ञानयज्ञ, which can be obtained by approaching with reverence and service the adepts whose inner vision

is opened (IV. 33-34). Having gained the divine knowledge, the aspirant must impart it to those who are worthy. This act of wisdom-propagation is so endearing to the Lord that no other act can equal it (XVIII. 68-69).

Sannyasa.

Sannyāsa, according to the *Gītā* is not cessation from action or abstaining from lighting sacrificial fire. It consists in being free from hatred and selfish desire, as well as from the pairs of opposites (V. 3) but doing such action as is duty, without wishing to enjoy its fruits for oneself (VI. 1). To renounce acts intended to yield sensual enjoyment is *Sannyāsa* (XVIII. 2). Renunciation of actions that are prescribed as duty is not proper and is opposed to *Sannyāsa* (XVIII. 7). Hence acts of true sacrifice intended for the good of the world, acts,of charity and self-control must never be given up (XVIII. 5). These must be done without attachment and without desire for their fruit—this is the Lord's own certain and best dictum (XVIII. 6). But even these unselfish acts should be performed as sacrifice to the Lord, who, being the friend of all, accepts and enjoys them (V. 29).

Yoga.

Yoga is doing action without attachment but in perfect union with the Divine Will and remaining unaffected both in success and failure—such equilibrium of mind is called *Yoga* (II. 48). The object of *Yoga* is primarily purification of the lower nature and for that end in view action is performed by the body, mind and reason without attachment (V. 11). When an aspirant is free from attachment to sensual gratification or selfish action of any kind and renounces all selfish desires, then he is said to have attained *Yoga* (VI. 4). Of course, the chief object of *Abhyāsayoga* is control and purification of fickle and unsteady mind by making it pure and one-pointed; but this is not possible without *Vairāgya* (dispassion) and *Abhyāsa* (constant practice)—*vide* VI. 35. The chief requirement in *Yoga* is to make the mind free of all selfish desires by control of senses which distract, and then fix it on the Self (VI. 24-25). By steady and sustained mental practice let the mind be quieted and steadied, having made it centred in the Self without the presence of any other thought (VI. 25). But,as often as the wavering and unsteady mind wanders from the Self, so often reining it in, let him bring it to the Self-centre again and again (VI. 26). The above is a clear hint of the practice which tends to make the mind one-pointed and concentrated, viz. by the practice of bringing it again and again to the point of concentration whenever it wanders from that centre. The Self referred to above is no other than the Supreme Self. It is said that, observing the vow of celibacy, one should concentrate one's mind upon the Lord, being serene and fearless (VI. 14). The supreme need in *Yoga* or union with Divine is for the aspirant to see this Supreme Self not confined to one's own body but abiding in all beings and all beings in the Supreme

Self, and thus he must see Him everywhere (VI. 29). He who sees the Lord everywhere and everything in Him, he is always present with Him and He also shall remain always present with him (VI. 30). As a necessary corollary of the above divine perception of expansion of the Self, the aspirant feels pleasure or pain of others as his own (both in thought and action) and then only he is a perfect *Yogī* (VI. 32). Thus he who cares only for himself and not for others can never be called a *Yogī*, Thus *Yoga* is not such abstraction but offering unselfish active service to the Lord with faith, and with the mind merged in Him (VI. 47).

Karmayoga.

Regarding action, Gītā's teaching is clear and emphatic, being delivered on the battle-field. Actions which are duty must be performed, but without attachment to their fruits, which should never constitute a motive; but in no case inaction should be the goal (II. 47). The above is the action-sacrifice or कर्मयज्ञ; but to make it कर्मयोग or *Yoga* of action, all actions must be surrendered to the Lord direct (IX. 26). The above is deduced from the principle that this entire manifestation is permeated by the Lord (VII. 7; IX. 4). Hence the Lord should be constantly kept in mind while performing actions for Him, and to Him both mind and reason should be surrendered, which will lift the aspirant to Him (VIII. 7). For attaining the Lord there is no need of any elaborate and difficult penances and other preparation but abandonment of selfish desires and attachment for the world, and surrender of all actions to Him and performing the same for Him. Even offer of mere leaf, flower, fruit or water by way of worship is eagerly accepted and enjoyed by Him if done with a loving heart (XI. 26-27). The best worship leading to the Lord is performance of duty appertaining to one's station in life as for Him, *i. e.*, considering it as His work (XVIII. 46, 56-57). Thus Arjuna was bidden to fight, though not for his njoyment but for the sake of the Lord, who wanted him to be merely His instrument (XI. 33). He was required to fight as his duty and as an offering to Lord without desire for the victory or care for defeat,taking pleasure and pain and gain and loss alike. Acts done in such a spirit do not bind (II. 38). Thus the supreme lesson taught by the *Gītā* is that, to attain the Supreme, an aspirant need not renounce the world, and that he can easily reach Him if he performs all his worldly duties appertaining to his station in life as for Him, considering them His works entrusted to him, surrendering all fruits to Him and not wishing to enjoy them for himself. The test of this attitude is that the doer remains unaffected by results and to him failure and success, gain and loss, honour and dishonour, friend and foe are alike.

Tapasya.

According to the *Gītā, Tapasyā* or real austerity is not bodily asceticism or torture; but, on the contrary, such torture

of the body offends the Lord residing inside it (XVII. 4, 19). The real *Tapasyā* is service of Devas, Brahmans, preceptors, the wise, as also purity, straightforwardness, continence and harmlessness—which constitute bodily *Tapasyā*. Oral penance or *Tapas* consists in uttering pleasant speech, truth-speaking, recitation and study of scriptures; and mental *Tapas* is calmness of mind, equilibrium, self-control and purity of the inner man (XVII. 14-16).

God's easily Accessible Abode.

The greatest blessing conferred by the *Gītā* is the proclamation that God resides in the heart of all beings and that there He should be sought and surrender of individual self (शरणम्) made (XVIII. 61-62). Man, who is a finite tiny centre, can never reach the Infinite or all-pervading *Brahma* or even the Logos residing in the uppermost region. For this reason the Lord has imprisoned Himself in the hearts of all beings so as to make it easy for them to reach Him in the heart. The *Gītā* has laid sufficient emphasis on this point.

Bhakti or Devotion.

According to the *Gītā, Bhakti* is the culmination of all Sādhanas and is the only path to reach the Supreme (XI. 54). *Bhakti* is surrender of all actions as well as body, word, mind, *Buddhi* and even the individual self (सर्वभावेन) and meditating on Him with undivided attention, keeping the mind always fixed upon His lotus like feet and being free from egoism (अहंकार) and sense of possession (ममत्व). Thinking all beings as permeated by the Lord (VII. 19), the devotee must practise compassion by serving the needy (XII. 6, 8, 13 and 14).

It is further said that the Lord may be worshipped as father (indirect वात्सल्यभाव), as friend (सख्यभाव) and as the beloved (आत्मसमर्पणभाव)—*vide* XI. 44. Here the ideal of *Premayoga* or love-relation has been hinted at; which the Gopīs practised in their sacred lives. The chief requirement in this love-relation or 'प्रेमभाव' is the entire surrender of all, and a mind always fixed upon the Lord without break even though engaged in worldly actions, which are equally done for His sake. Devotion permeates all Yogas to make them real for *Karmayoga*—*vide* IX. 27, for *Abhyāsayoga*, VI. 47 and, for *Jñānayoga* VII. 17.

Blessings of Endurance.

The contacts of matter, O son of Kuntī, giving cold and heat, pleasure and pain, they come and go, impermanent; endure them bravely, O Bhārata.

The man whom these torment not, O chief of men, balanced in pain and pleasure, steadfast, he is fitted for immortality.

(*Gītā II. 14-15*)

Navadha Bhakti.

By Gangaprasad Mehta, M. A.

During the long course of untold centuries Hinduism has moved forward, with all the dynamic force of a living Faith, from point to point under the stress of great psychical changes that have influenced the life-history of India. It has derived its sap and vitality from the tap-root of Ancient Wisdom, which earnest and devout seekers after Truth have enriched from age to age. To follow the march of the Hindu Mind through all the ringing groves of thought, to understand something of the long travail of the Hindu heart in its search for God, cannot but inspire the deepest respect and sympathy for its struggle. No religion in the world save Hinduism has produced a richer literature or one so instinct with sublimity of thought and grace of expression. To dip into this wealth, to know something of its choicest gems should be a duty and an inspiration to every pious Hindu.

In order to grasp clearly the rhythmic procession of our spiritual history we should study it in its psychological setting, in the light of those psychological principles which have governed from age to age the great movements of our spiritual thought. Broadly speaking, we find one phase of Hinduism dominated by the ideal of 'Jñāna'—the quest of Truth for its own sake,—and another by that of 'Upāsanā'—love and adoration of the Highest. During these alternations of 'Jñāna' and 'Upāsanā' we come across times in which 'Jñāna' becomes static and 'Upāsanā' becomes crystallized into 'Karma', formal and external rites and ceremonies. Accordingly, we have in Hindu religious thought three great departments of study and methods of spiritual discipline, namely, 'Jnāna', 'Karma', and 'Bhakti'. "For the spiritual uplift of men", says Srī Kṛṣṇa in the 'Bhāgavata', "I have expounded three Yogas—'Jñāna', 'Karma' and 'Bhakti'; there is no other method of spiritual fulfilment."

These ideals of our religious thought and discipline are regarded as complementary to one another; they form an organic whole and are inter-dependent. They act and react upon one another. If they are properly co-ordinated and practised, they lead up the aspiring soul to its divine destination. All the three 'Yogas' must work in unison for the uplift of the Soul. But, if one Yoga is followed to the exclusion of others, if, for instance, 'Karma'—the formal, ceremonial and institutional religion—is practised without seeking light from the philosophies of Truth and of Love, the spirit of man is bound to become 'cribbed, cabined and confined' and lose its capacity for its fuller self-realization in the True and the Beautiful. We are, therefore, repeatedly exhorted in the Upaniṣads and the Gītā that 'Karma-Kāṇḍa' is not an end in itself, and that its real efficacy lies in its being a means to self-purification and spiritual enlightenment. The Lord's Song condemns the attitude of exclusive devotion to the mere ceremonial forms of religion, divorced from thought and faith, in the following unequivocal terms:—

But undiscerning men, who deck
Their speech with verbal flowers,
With scripture phrases, and proclaim,
"The total truth is ours";

Who hug desires, who aim at heaven,
New births, rewards, the swarm
Of lordly luxuries that flow
From duties multiform;

Who love their lordly luxuries
With passion overwrought,
These have no wisdom resolute;
They know no centred thought.

For scripture deals with objects.
Superior to this
Pure goodness be, not glad, not grieved,
Calm, free from avarice.

For scripture, to the Brahman who
Discerns and understands,
Has just such value as well
In overflooded lands."

(*The Gita: Ryder's Translation*)

When religion becomes a mere cult—a set of customary rites and observances unenlivened by knowledge, meditation and faith—,it loses its promise and potency. When 'Karma-Kāṇḍa' becomes an end in itself, the clear stream of rational faith loses its way in the dreary desert sand of dead habit. It is then and not till then that priests, blind leaders of the blind, begin to dominate society, retarding the progress of the human spirit towards its pursuit of Truth. The Gītā says rightly that our Veda is not Vedavāda or the flowery speech of the unwise priest. Hindu history gives continual evidences that our Veda does not allow thought to sleep on the soft cushion of crystallized custom for long; that priests have never been all-in-all; and that poets and philosophers, seers and saints have appeared in unbroken succession, holding aloft the torch-light amidst the encircling gloom and guiding our footsteps from

"The unreal to the real,
From darkness to light,
From death to immortality."

In pursuing the history of India's spiritual quest, the fact should never be forgotten that Poets, Priests and Philosophers have built up brick by brick this marvellous palace of Art known as Hinduism for the aspiring soul.

HINDUISM—A SYNTHESIS OF JÑANA, KARMA AND BHAKTI.

It is worthy of remark that Hindu methods of spiritual discipline, centring round their philosophy of 'Jñāna', 'Karma' and 'Bhakti', are perfectly in accord with the psychic nature of man, who is a complex of Intellect, Will and Feeling. They are rightly called Yogas; they are related to life. According to the Gītā, 'Yoga' is skill in actions, the stuff of which life is made—'योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्'. They must, therefore, satisfy the needs of man's whole being. The important point to note is that man is neither 'pure feeling' nor 'pure reason.' The feeling element in religion, though preponderant, cannot be mere feeling. It cannot be dissociated either from thought or action. All psychic processes involve the subtle play and interaction of thought and emotion. The truth is that feeling and reason must work together inseparably in the process of our spiritual development. We cannot afford to eliminate altogether the intellectual element from our spiritual life. Nor should we regard religion as a mere affair of the intellect. To Hegel, Religion is truth conceived in concrete, pictorial, metaphorical forms, while Philosophy proper is the same truth stripped of its sensuous clothing and interpreted in terms of pure thought. Others, again, have defined religion in terms of the moral will. Arnold's famous dictum is—'Religion is morality touched with emotion.' According to Kant, Religion is the recognition of all our duties as Divine Commandments. The poet Wordsworth interprets Religion in terms of the Moral Law, expressing the idea in the famous lines:—

"Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost
Wear the Godhead's most benignant grace."

According to Rudolf Otto, the essential feature in religion is the 'Creature feeling', the feeling of self-abasement before an Awful Power, mysterious yet having in it something strangely fascinating and attractive. Each of these definitions of religion, no doubt, contains an important element of truth, but does not exhaust the richness of its meaning. Religion as the deepest expression of our noblest ideal, must needs strengthen our moral will, must satisfy the demands of reason and, at the same time, must bring comfort and solace to our yearning soul; for—

"The Thirst that from the soul doth rise,
Doth ask a drink Divine."

FEELING ELEMENT IN RELIGION.

While we have to give full play to our moral will and intellect for the full fruition of our spiritual life, we cannot lose sight of the fact that it is necessary to appeal to all the high concerns of man's moral and religious life from the intellect to the heart. Even while the intellect displays itself in its full glory, the heart still pines for 'that something afar from the sphere of our sorrow'. The way to find God is not through the avenue of reason, though reason may save us from many a pitfall; but through the way of ardent faith and feeling. The poet-seer Lord Tennyson bears testimony to the truth when he sings in organ tones:—

"A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing Reason's colder part,
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Another poet, gifted with a like vision and faculty divine, utters the same truth in the solemn notes as follows:—

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Wisdom at once and Power
Are welling, bubbling forth, unseen, incessantly."

What Wordsworth calls 'principles of deeper birth' or 'intimations of higher truths' always come to us from our most inward feelings. Thus, says Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Gītā:—"By devotion he knoweth Me in essence who and what I am; having thus known Me in essence, he forthwith entereth into the Supreme." Feeling is the central factor in religion. It is the inmost core of our being—the very pith and substance of our self. Eliminate the feeling tone from our life of religion and it becomes cold, colourless, mechanical, lifeless. Religion captures the passion of the heart for God; it touches the inner susceptibilities of the human spirit and evokes an immediate response to all that is true, and good and beautiful. In all our spiritual seeking there must rule that spirit of loving devotion to our ideal which stimulates and draws forth all that is noblest in our nature.

WHAT IS BHAKTI ?

The essence of true Bhakti lies in the soul's feeling of immediate contact and fusion with the Infinite. Bhakti pines for a life in which all the chords of our being shall vibrate with the touch and embrace of Infinite life which is Bliss Everlasting. Fired with imagination Bhakti expresses itself in the joy of service, in worship and meditation. The feeling grows with the growth of our knowledge; it widens with the widening of our horizons of thought. But it is always the urge of the heart, the constraining power of our affections which allures us to the brighter worlds and leads the way. Bhakti, says Sāṇḍilya, is extreme devotion to God which comes after the realization of His Glory: माहात्म्यज्ञानपूर्वा सा परानुरक्तिरीश्वरे'. It is knowledge of God as well as obedience to His Will: 'ज्ञानकर्मानुगृहीतो भक्तियोगः'. Through 'Bhakti' man becomes vividly conscious of his relation to God and feels more and more that his Sovereign Lord is nigh who deserves all his love and loyalty. When this feeling of affinity, nearness and allegiance to Him grows upon the heart, there is 'a turning round of the eye of the soul', as Plato put it, 'from darkness to light, from the transient to the eternal.' With the awakening of this love-consciousness, the mind of man suffers the nature of an insurrection against the things of the earth, earthy. Then follows 'Vairāgya', non-attachment to the objects of sense, which is a necessary concomitant

of Bhakti. Devoid of self-renunciation and discrimination Bhakti degenerates into a mere blind rapture, an unchecked flow of emotion. But in its truest sense, it is not a carnival of feeling, but an illumination of the soul, suffused with the light of wisdom. Verily, to draw near God is to withdraw from this world of sense.

THE PLAY OF EMOTIONS.

The whole drift and purpose of Bhakti is to bring God nearer and nearer to man's vision and heart, that he may grow more and more into His Image. Bhakti, like Philosophy, begins in wonder, the sense of awe in the presence of God's beauteous creation. The sense of awe and wonder gradually develops into emotions of admiration, gratitude and reverence. In the play of these subtle, sweet, spiritual emotions man begins to feel that his life should be a perennial 'thanksgiving to the Power that made him'. Overpowered by the sense of wonder, the devout man views with inexpressible delight the handiwork of God in Nature and is filled with adoring reverence for its Mighty Author on whose Command the heavens and the earth stand poised in their respective orbits.*

In the first instance God is worshipped in His Omnipotent Glory with wonder-struck hearts. But as man rises to the higher levels of knowledge and purity the feelings engendered by the idea of God's Supreme Majesty (ऐश्वर्य) are replaced and transfigured by that of His Serene Sweetness (माधुर्य), which kindles his imagination, finding vent into impassioned expressions of Bhakti.

NINE FORMS OF BHAKTI.

The Hindu exponents of Bhakti have subjected all such emotional expressions flowing from loving faith in and communion with God to a subtle analysis and have dwelt at length upon the methods of training the mind by a proper nurture of its finer susceptibilities into devotional moods. They have analysed the various notes of that spiritual symphony we call Bhakti, by which the soul attunes itself in increasing measure to the object of its loving adoration. They speak of nine forms of Bhakti, which are really so many phases and stages in the evolution of perfect love for God.

They are summed up in the following beautiul verse of the 'Bhāgavata':—

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम् ।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥

The first stage in devotional self-culture is called 'Sravaṇa', in which the devotee seeks to establish communion with his Lord, hearing 'with the hearing ear and the understanding heart' all about His mighty Deeds, and in listening to His Glories he rejoiceth. The process of 'Sravaṇa Bhakti' develops into an irresistible desire in the heart of the Bhakta to chant the glory of his Lord. Like Suka, Nārada, Sūra and Tulasī he pours out his full heart in profuse strains in the praise of his Lord. The third stage is called 'brooding', 'Smaraṇa', in which the idea of God constantly recurs in the devotee's mind. Prahlāda is cited as a typical example of 'Smaraṇa Bhakti' in the Bhāgavata. In the next higher stage of Bhakti the devotee begins to feel the first thrill of Divine Life, and with it grows his thirst for losing himself in that life. The form of Bhakti implied in the term 'Pāda-Sevana' assumes an attitude of loving service dedicated to God. It is not some far-off Divinity to which worship and service are offered. Worship and service have to be offered to God who is immanent in His living Creation, which the Vedas symbolize as the Feet of the Lord—'पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि'. When the fifth stage of worship, 'Archana', is attained, the Bhakta, rapt in still, sweet communion with his Bhagavān, begins to forget himself and passes into the sixth stage of 'Vandana', when he feels the presence of the Lord everywhere and in everything and, like Arjuna, begins to

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*एतस्यैवाक्षरस्य प्रशासने द्यावापृथिव्यौ विधृतौ तिष्ठतः ।
(*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*)

prostrate before all things.* When the Lord has become enthroned in his heart, the seventh stage of 'Dāsya' naturally follows, in which whatever he does he does for the Glory of God. In this service mood of Bhakti he is obsessed by the sense, "Lord ! I am Thy unprofitable servant; not my will but Thine be done." Bhakti is, in essence, to borrow Royce's suggestive phrase, 'a religion of loyalty'. It is the loyalty of heart, will and thought to that ultimate reality we call God. The human spirit longs to come closer and closer to God, to feel His nearness and affinity and to find joy in His service. The attitude of self-surrender to the Divine Will is finally expressed in the following neat little verse of Lord Tennyson, who prayed:—

"Thou seemest human and divine,
The Highest, Holiest Manhood, Thou;
Our wills are ours, we know not why,
Our wills are ours to make them Thine"

(*In Memoriam*)

Verily, the Bhakta seeks his life's reward, 'Working as ever in the Great Taskmaster's eye'.‡

By 'Sravaṇa' and 'Kīrtana' and other acts of worship 'Bhakti' becomes a constant mood wherefrom love and gratitude for God and His great attributes streams forth without let or hindrance from the human heart. But the spirit of man ever longs to seek more and more intimate fellowship with God. The idea of a Transcendent God—'A spirit beyond the Stars'—does not enkindle that fierce, unfailing feeling response in our soul which demands a God who verily reciprocates our affections, who makes us perfect in our human weakness, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. *

Arjuna trembled at the sight of the Universal from, the Cosmic Picture, displayed by Srī Kṛṣṇa, and exclaimed, "I am rejoiced with seeing what none before has seen. But my mind is quaking with fear; show me the same form (as before). Be gracious, O Lord of Gods ! Home of the universe !"

"With obeisance and prostration of body I crave grace of Thee, the adorable Lord; as father with son, as comrade with comrade, as lover with mistress, mayst Thou bear with me, O Lord !"

"I would fain see Thee in the same form as erstwhile with diadem, with mace, with disc in hand; assume that same four-armed shape, O Thou of Thousands of Arms, the Image of the Universe!"

Arjuna seeks to establish a more personal and closer relationship between himself and his Lord than that of mere master and servant. The distance and the dual sense which keeps God and Soul apart, yields place to a deeper love-union in 'Sakhya Bhakti'—the devotion of a friend to a friend. In this higher aspect of Bhakti the Bhakta commends himself unto His guidance and feels that he is 'saved from isolation', that he is saved by surrendering himself to something which is dearest to his heart. In the superb language of the Upaniṣads, the Bhakta and his Bhagavān at this stage are "twin bright-plumaged Birds, boon companions, dwelling in love on the self-same Tree."

'द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।'

The Bhakta begins to walk with God as with his intimate guide, philosopher and friend. He feels His living presence, which is a vision, a challenge, a light to his eyes, a compulsion to his heart. At His call he breaks forth into a response like Arjuna in the Bhagavadgītā:— "Infatuation is gone; Right understanding

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* नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
खं वायुमग्निं सलिलं महीं च
ज्योतींषि सत्वानि दिशो द्रुमादीन् ।
सरित्समुद्रांश्च हरेः शरीरं
यत्किञ्च भूतं प्रणमेदनन्यः ॥

(*Bhagvata* XI. 2.

‡ सो अनन्य जाके असि मति न टरइ हनुमंत ।
मैं सेवक सचराचर रूपरासि भगवंत ॥

(*Tulasidas*)

* गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।

(*Gita*)

is acquired by Thy grace, O Infallible Lord. I am waiting with doubts dispelled. I will do Thy bidding." (Gītā XVIII.)

The ultimate phase of Bhakti is summed up in the term 'Atma-Nivedana', which demands the final surrender of the devotee's self to Bhagavān absolutely and unconditionally. In the serenity of this higher faith and the ecstasy of joy that goes along with it, the devotee dedicates his whole being to God, and rises to those higher peaks of vision where he becomes completely absorbed in Him. He becomes God-intoxicated. There is no longer self-love in him, since God has taken the place of self, and his whole life is transfigured. Every fibre of his being begins to throb with divine life. If he is an emotional Bhakta, he is all tears and cries and raptures. Such an ecstatic Bhakti was typical of Sri Chaitanya and Srī Mira Bai. The Milk-maids of Vṛndāvana are depicted in the 'Bhāgavata' as embodiments of this highest form of devotion to God. They are said to have kept the flame of divine love burning in their hearts at its white heat. They were so completely immersed in their love for Srī Kṛṣṇa that they felt His presence everywhere, as a bereaved lover does for the sake of his beloved.

The blessedness of love-union between the Bhakta and the Bhagavān is sometimes heightened by the poignant sense of loneliness in separation from Him. The soul's yearning for Him grows keener and intenser until they both clasp together in sweet communion in which thoughts' melody

"Becomes too sweet for utterance and it dies
In words, to live again in looks, which dart
With thrilling tone into the voiceless heart,
Harmonising silence without a sound.

(*Shelley's Epipsychidion*)

Just as a dumb man can taste but cannot express his sense-impression, so is that love; it can be felt, but not described: 'मूकास्वादनवत्' (Nārada: 'Bhakti-Sūtra'). In that state of supreme self-surrender to God the Bhakta enjoys the sweetest communion and feels the highest rapture.

Bhakti in its higher expression is illuminated vision and heightened activity, not a blind rapture, nor an ineffectual sentiment. Yet, it retains a clear self-consciousness in its divine madness. It does not desire to be merged in the Impersonal 'Brahma' 'like the dewdrop into the silent sea', but longs to enjoy the bliss of affection.

Beautiful legends are told with the daintiest touches of art and picturesqueness of imagination in our Bhakti literature in illustration of these various forms and moods of Bhakti; lives of saints have been described according to the prominent characteristics of 'Bhakti' or devotional attitude (निष्ठा) which distinguishes each one of them. A verse in the 'Bhāgavata' mentions the names of saints with particular reference to their special characteristics of Bhakti:—

"All these verily felt the joy of Divine communion: Parīkṣit, while hearing about his Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa, Suka while singing songs of praise, Prahlāda while musing and brooding, Lakṣmī while waiting upon the lotus-feet of her Lord, Pṛthu while performing acts of worship, Akrūra in prostration, Hanumān in service, Arjuna in fellowship, Bali in absolute self-surrender."

SENTIMENTS IN BHAKTI.

Forms of Bhakti have been distinguished by their characteristic Rasas, Sentiments, enumerated as 'Sānta', 'Dāsya', 'Sakhya', 'Vātsalya' and 'Mādhurya'. They represent ascending grades, in their order here given, of the loving faith which is expressed by a holy man. 'Sānti' is 'Bhakti' in its simplest form, a mere resignation. In 'Dāsya' it takes a more active form in the obedience which the devotee takes upon himself. 'Vātsalya' implies an attitude of tender fondness for God as that between mother

and child. There is more of personal touch and communion between a devotee and his deity in 'Sakhya Bhakti'. In 'Mādhurya' there is passionate love which wells up from the heart surrendered to God. In this highest stage of Bhakti the grandeur and sublimity associated with the idea of God is thrown into the shade; it is still there, but in the height of love that aspect of the Infinite is overshadowed by the enchanting vision of that

"Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move."

(*Shelley*)

We have no language but a cry of bewilderment to express the fulness of the joy felt in the presence of that ineffable Beauty by God-intoxicated Souls. The seers of the Upaniṣads have borne testimony to the same experience while declaring: "Just as when a man is embraced by his dear wife he forgets the presence of the objects near him, so also when the spirit is embraced by the Universal Self, he knows nothing outside nor inside; for he has attained an end which involves the fulfilment of all ends." (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad IV.3.21)

In the presence of that Vision Beatific, the Milk-maids of Vṛndāvana stood entranced and cried out in joy—"What woman in all the worlds, O Beloved Lord, bewitched by the sweet and ravishing strains of Thy flute, could not be drawn away from the approved Aryan path. Having further seen this form, most bewitching in the three worlds, who could keep to it ! For at the sight of this form cows, birds, trees and beasts stand bristling with joy."* Verily, Bhakti in its ultimate phase culminates in the realization of Truth in Beauty.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BHAKTI.

Some Christian critics of Hindu religion characterize Bhakti as non-ethical in its tenor and tendency. The 'Supreme peace', 'the everlasting region' to which Kṛṣṇa brings his worshippers, says Macnicol is no kingdom of God, no realm of the service of love in righteousness, but a self-regarding state of personal purification and endowment. It is not, as the kingdom of Heaven is, 'a kingdom of moral ends,' in which all private and selfish interests are for ever abolished. When it suggests, as so often Indian visions of the emancipated state suggest, that our centre of selfhood shall vanish into God's, it dissolves in cloudland, for the only eternal city of God is that where 'His servant shall serve Him', built up as it must be upon the solely abiding foundations of duty and of responsibility." (Macnicol's 'Indian Theism', p. 260)

Contrary to Macnicol's misleading observations we find that the ethical note in the Gītā is pitched in a higher key; and that it inculcates the most unselfish devotion to moral ends. The end and aim of Bhakti can never be egoistic, the peace and rest of one's own restless soul. The Bhakta has a double personality—the man in him is intensely active while the divine in him is supremely quiet. He is steadfast in wisdom ('स्थितप्रज्ञः'), unswayed by passion, fear and anger ('वीतरागभयक्रोधः'), full of pity and kindness, ('मैत्रः करुणः'), non-violent (अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानाम'), free from 'I' and 'mine' consciousness ('निर्ममो निरहंकारः'), devoted to the good of all beings ('सर्वभूतहिते रतः'). The greatest among the devotees, according to the 'Bhāgavata' is one who beholds the Divine Self in all beings and all beings in the Divine Self.* Knowing that Hari is the Indwelling

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* का स्त्र्यङ्ग ! ते कलपदायतवेणुगीत-
संमोहितार्यचरितान्न चलेत्त्रिलोक्याम् ।
त्रैलोक्यसौभगमिदञ्च निरीक्ष्य रूपं
यद्गोद्विजद्रुममृगाः पुलकान्यबिभ्रन् ॥

(*Bhagavata* X)

* सर्वभूतेषु यः पश्येद्भगवद्भावमात्मनः ।
भूतानि भगवत्यात्मन्येष भागवतोत्तमः ॥

(*Bhagavata* XI. ii)

Spirit of all beings, the wise cherish the deepest love for all of them. The 'Bhāgavata' says elsewhere:—"Saintly souls are greatly afflicted by the sorrows of the world, because that is the highest worship of the Divinity who is the Soul of all beings. A life of Bhakti is a dedicated life consisting in spontaneously surrendering all actions to God whose Will is Righteousness, and feeling the greatest misery in forgetting Him."*

Pilgrims on the path of Bhakti have to lose their life in order to find it, efface their 'I' and surrender their 'mine'. Thus, sang Mahatmas Kabir and Rahim:—"When 'I' dominated my inward self, Guru would not grace it by His presence. Now that Guru has been enthroned therein 'I' has made its exit. Strait and narrow is the lane of Love, where two cannot be accomodated." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

"When the beauty of the dearest of all dear things has overpowered the eyes, how can they be captivated by the glamour of sense-objects ? The wayfarer has to retrace his steps for want of accomodation in the crowded rest-house."

प्रीतम छबि नैनन बसी, परछबि कहाँ समाय ।
भरी सराय 'रहीम' लखि आप पथिक फिरि जाय ॥

"O Kṛṣṇa ! so long as people are not yours, passion, anger and the like are their robbers, home is their prison-house, infatuation the fetters in their feet."

Humility and meekness are typical of a life of self-surrender, for God hates pride and loves meekness.

The true and sincere Bhakta has the beauty of flowers and their sweet modesty. As a little child he lies upon God's bosom always.

Blessed are the pure in heart, says the Bible, for they shall see God. The 'Bhāgavata' strikes a clearer note when it says: "The heart must be washed clean of its scum and dirt born of action and qualities, and purified by the intensest devotion to the Lotus-feet of the Lord. As the clear vision beholds the radiance of the Sun, so the pure heart alone can comprehend the real Atmā." In the eyes of the Bhakta the moral law is not something external to himself, imposed upon him by an alien Power, but an urge divine which impels him from within. He must become a law unto himself, inasmuch as "love is the fulfilment of the law." As a method of self-realization Bhakti is, verily, revelation in knowledge, inspiration in art, motive in morality and the fulness of religious joy. Man, said Fichte very rightly, can will nothing but what he loves, his love is the soul and at the same time the infallible spring of his volition and of all his life's striving and movement. Those who know God best render unto Him the purest service.

The question may be asked: How can a man respond to the call of the moral ideal, if he allows his mind to run riot in the emotional ecstasies of Bhakti ? Immersed in the bliss of Bhakti, he may turn a deaf ear to the still, sad music of humanity, and may shut his eyes against the tears and tragedies of human life. But we have to remember that Bhakti is not mere emotional rapture but a sustained and serene faith in the moral ordering of God's universe. Bhakti, indeed, finds its best nature in the depths and not in the tumult of the soul. Impelled by the idea of God being in all things and all things in God—हरिरेव जगज्जगदेवहरिर्हरितो जगतो नहि भिन्नतनुः—,the Bhakta is filled with such a sweetness of temper and equanimity of mind that he resists not evil, overcomes evil by good and is perfectly non-violent even under the gravest provocation. He possesses his soul in patience in the direst misfortune—समदुःखसुखःक्षमी. His spirit is finally touched to fine issues to a degree that he can never remain unaffected when he sees the sufferings of his fellow-beings, however low and

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† तदर्पिताखिलाचारता तद्विस्मरणे परमव्याकुलता ।
(*Narada: Bhakti-Sutra*)

depraved they may be—'साधवो दीनवत्सलाः'. The life of Bhakti is not one of mirth and laughter, but of sorrows and suffering. We recall the examples of Kuntī, Rantideva and Prahlāda, the ideal Bhaktas, who would not accept the boon of peace and rest for themselves. "O Teacher of the Universe !", thus prayed Kuntī, "may there be sufferings and misfortunes in store for me here and there:

विपदः सन्तु नः शश्वत्तत्र तत्र जगद्गुरो ।
भवतो दर्शनं यत्स्यादपुनर्भवदर्शनम् ॥

(*Bhagavata*)

I crave not the supreme goal with the eight perfections, cried Rantideva, nor an escape from the round of birth and death. I long for suffering, for a thousand and one heart-aches to which flesh is heir; nay, I long to suffer for all beings by living and moving in their midst that they themselves may be free from pain and suffering.

To sum up, the claims and the values of the True and the Good in the economy of spiritual life have never been lost sight of in our ideal of Bhakti, which has, verily, been 'the anchor of our purest thoughts, the nurse, the guide, the guardian of the heart, and soul of all our moral being.'

The Gist of 'Gita-Rahasya'.

By Sadasiva Sastri Bhide.

The importance of the Gītā is as great as that of the Upaniṣads. All the great sages, saints, Achāryas and Mahatmas of the past and present have acknowledged it. It is therefore unnecessary to say what high position this great work occupies in the world. The greatness of the Gītā has been universally acknowledged; but, regarding the interpretation of its philosophy, there have always been differences. The great Achāryas maintained their differences on the question of 'Dwaita' and 'Adwaita'. But Lokamanya Tilak's interpretation creates a difference between 'Sannyāsa' (Renunciation) and 'Karmayoga' (Philosophy of action). Before the publication of the 'Gītā-Rahasya' there ever existed co-operation between 'Sannyāsa' and 'Vedānta', the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. 'Vedānta' was considered then as inalienable with 'Sannyāsa'. But Lokamanya has proved scientifically and on the authority of the Gītā itself that, if the philosophy of renunciation leads one to the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, the philosophy of Action also achieves the same end. If 'Karma-Sannyāsa' in unison with knowledge leads one to the higher bliss, 'Karmayoga' also in unison with knowledge leads independently to the same end. Not only so, 'Karmayoga' stands on a still higher level. An attempt therefore is made in this article to explain this theory of the Lokamanya.

When the Lord preached the highest philosophy of the Gītā to Arjuna, the Vedic civilization was at the zenith of its glory. This is one reason why 'Srīmad Bhagavadgītā' presents in itself an epitome of the essentials of the Sanātana Vedic Dharma. It is not within our power to estimate the real worth of the Lord who delivered this Divine Message. We can only say this much that He was an incarnation of the Supreme Being, and that Arjuna, who received this message, was equally great. He had the capacity to stand on the level of the Divine Lord, and it was this which made the Lord hold him by the hand' and lift him up to the level of His Divine Message. It was this very fact which induced the great sage Vyāsa to pay homage to Arjuna along with Srī Kṛṣṇa in the following verse:—

नारायणं नमस्कृत्य नरं चैव नरोत्तमम् ।
देवीं सरस्वतीं व्यासं ततो जयमुदीरयेत् ॥

We shall endeavour in the following lines to show that the message which finally and decisively raised Arjuna to a level equal to that of Srī Bhagavān Himself, by dispelling his delusion and remorse, was intended to lead him on the path of action rather than that of inaction.

ARJUNA'S DELUSION.

That society alone, says a Greek philosopher, which is founded on a well-regulated order may be considered to have reached the highest stage of civilization. It will be seen from the narrative given in the Mahābhārata of the Great War, that the Vedic society had reached that stage. The life of a man entirely depends upon the society he lives in. The responsibility in respect of an individual's private and public concerns, therefore, naturally devolves upon him. Particularly those who are entitled to the role of a citizen can in no wise be exonerated from both these types of responsibility. They alone are regarded as helmsmen of human society. It is they who were called by the name of 'Dwija' in ancient times.

The division of life into four stages such as the student life, married life, ascetic life and the life of renunciation, is very useful and important from the point of view of evolution of life. Unbridled enjoyment of sensuous pleasures leads to mental and physical degeneration. But abstemiousness also, if carried to an extreme, has an adverse effect on the mind. The Vedic seers, therefore, founded the institution of the four orders or Aśramas, as they are called, on the two cardinal principles of well-regulated enjoyment and a reasonable degree of abstemiousness and thereby chalked out a straight and flowery path for the individuals to follow. While regulating the life of an individual on a sound basis in this way, they also carefully evolved a beautiful scheme of social organization. The duties of the four classes, viz., Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Sūdras were defined in such a clear-cut way that the community might ever maintain its organic strength and vigour. A mere glance at the respective duties assigned to each unit of this organiation will convince us of the truth of this assertion. Thus it will be seen that the four Aśramas were institutions for the good of the individual and the four Varṇas for the welfare of the whole community. 'Varṇa-Dharma' and 'Aśrama-Dharma', though supplementing each other, are yet different. That is why a discrimination between the two as to which is superior and which is inferior becomes inevitable. Although both of these Dharmas help each other, yet there are occasions in the life of a man when he is compelled to abandon one and cling to the other. Under such circumstances he has to use his discretion and see which is the superior of the two, so that he may choose between them. It is, however, not an easy thing to discriminate between what is essential and what is non-essential, what is to be done and what is not to be done in the circumstances, as also what is righteous action and what is otherwise. All these questions assume such a serious aspect that one finds himself at a loss what to do and is consequently non-plussed. On such occasions the long list of duties assigned to each 'Varṇa' and 'Aśrama' does not matter much. Ordinarily, therefore, one prefers to keep mum and go by the wise adage that the principles of religion are rooted deeply in the cavity of the heart (धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितं गुहायाम् '). It may be possible to do so when the matter in hand is something not very serious; but, when it is serious, a man with a simple heart cannot help giving way to grief and sorrow. Arjuna was faced with a very serious problem, which demanded immediate attention and could not be evaded.

When Arjuna stood on the battle-field and gazed on the armies arrayed on both sides, eager to rush to arms, he discovered that the prominent figures on both sides he could count among his

relatives and friends. Was it not sinful, said he to himself, to hold up arms against noble souls like Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who were not only held in great veneration by the whole nation but also deserved great respect from him personally? It was no doubt the duty of a Kṣatriya to offer battle to one who summoned him to fight; but was it not, he enquired within himself, the duty of a man to increase the prestige and prosperity of the family he was born in, to serve his elders who brought him up, and to adore his teachers who dispelled his ignorance and raised him to the higher plane of knowledge? To add to the prosperity of his family, to serve his elders and to offer worship to his preceptors was the foremost duty of a 'Gṛhastha' (householder). As a Kṣatriya, on the battlefield he would be called upon to slay his elders as well as his venerable preceptors, and bring ruin on the family. And those very persons for whom that bloody war was being waged would have to be killed in battle. It was therefore preferable, he thought, to follow the 'Dharma' of a 'Gṛhastha' on the occasion rather than resort to warfare, which was the duty of a Kṣatriya. Arjuna made up his mind accordingly. His thoughts no doubt, were noble and praiseworthy. He chose at this critical moment the path which, according to him, led to the real fulfilment of human life. This constituted a beauty of his generous mind and altruistic nature. Arjuna thought that the consummation of human existence lay in renouncing actions rather than performing them. He was certain that some day in his life he would be called upon to enter the order of Sannyāsa. If so, why not do it at that very moment, which would be more desirable? For, by doing so, he would escape from the sins of killing his elders and preceptors and bringing his family to complete destruction, while at the same time he would also be fulfilling the misson of his life. He therefore arrived at the conclusion that renunciation of actions, which was an 'Aśrama-Dharma', was nobler and purer than the 'Varṇa-Dharma', the duty devolving upon him by virtue of his being a Kṣatriya, associated as it was with the selfish motives of victory (honour and prestige), dominion, etc. Arjuna was convinced that that was the right course for him. That is why he resolved to set aside his 'Varṇa-Dharma' for the time being, accounting it as of lesser value, and decided to embrace the 'Aśrama-Dharma' as the superior of the two. He therefore communicated his decision to Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa and, while laying down his mighty Gāṇḍīva, of which he had been so fond and which he had held dearer than his very life, he felt such agony of mind that that renowned and hard-hearted warrior began to weep and sob like a helpless child.

THE LORD'S MESSAGE.

Srī Bhagavān heard the doubts confusing the mental equilibrium of Arjuna and his arguments in support of his decision, carefully. He then began to deliver His message with a view to dispelling his ignorance.

'Atmā' or Self, said the Lord, did not perish and was therefore eternal and beyond the limitations of time. Having preached to him the immortality of the soul, Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa proceeded to lay bare the fallacies of his arguments and the erroneous nature of his decision. "If by fighting a battle", He went on, "you incur worldly as well as other-worldly losses, you expose yourself to infamy and the sin of neglecting your duty, by abstaining from it. If, therefore, fighting battles is considered bad, abstaining from it is considered as still worse." Thus Arjuna's arguments in support of renunciation could not hold water. The reasons which led Arjuna to believe that 'Aśrama-Dharma' was superior to 'Varṇa-Dharma' were faulty; for, in arriving at this decision, he was actuated by the belief that victory, dominion or enjoyment of worldly pleasures was the objective of the battle. This was, however, a wrong belief. His power of judgment failed to differentiate between right and wrong. The intellect by means of which we discriminate between right and wrong

should be free from bias and established in 'Yoga' (harmony). What are the characteristics of such a harmonized intellect? This has been briefly explained by the Lord in verses 45 to 48 of the second chapter of the 'Gītā'. Of these the 45th verse embodies the main point inculcated by Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa. It runs as follows:—

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान्॥

"The Vedas deal with the three attributes; transcend thou these three attributes, O Arjuna, uninfluenced by the dualities of nature, settled in permanent goodness, unmindful of acquisition and preservation and self-possessed."

The above verse contains three negative and two positive injunctions. The word 'निस्त्रैगुण्य' inculcates the relinquishment of all sorts of sense-desires, whether of the Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic type. Enjoyment of worldly pleasures and indulging in luxuries of various kinds are the demands of individual nature, not of the Society. Anything leading to the dislocation of social order ought to be discarded. But the right of governance vests in the organic order of society and has no connection whatever with the enjoyment of pleasures. It is generally seen that when the passion for enjoyment of worldly pleasures in one or more individuals abnormally increases, it creates hunger for dominance as well. But history bears ample testimony to the fact that those weak-minded persons who are in the clutches of passions and welter in the morass of luxuries prove utterly incompetent for exercising power and authority. The more a man identifies himself with the larger interests of the social order, the more he attains competence for dominance. Dominance is not the Dharma of an individual. It is a Dharma of the organic social order. The Mahābhārata also endorses this view (vide 'Sānti Parva' 90. 14-15). Dominance could not be interlocked with the passion for enjoyment. If it is done, it is bound to produce evil results. The curbing of this longing for the enjoyment of worldly pleasures and directing one's intellect towards the betterment of his larger Self—Lokahita—is what is inculcated by the word 'निस्त्रैगुण्य' in the above verse.

The word 'निर्द्वन्द्व' warns us not to allow our reason to be swayed by passions, and the word 'निर्योगक्षेम' enjoins us to give up wantonness. The word 'नित्यसत्त्वस्थ' points to the unfoldment of Divine nature or determinate reason, and the word 'आत्मवान्' should be taken to mean possessed of scriptural knowledge and wisdom. There is no other verse so important as this in this context. The importance of this verse is thus well-recognized. It may therefore be said without the least fear of contradiction that verse 45 is the typical verse defining 'Yoganiṣṭhā' or the position of one who is established in harmony. The doctrine preached herein is not a new creation, but in the 'Mīmāṃsā' system it is mentioned as 'Aprāpti', which they denominated later as 'Apūrva Vidhi.'

The fact is, that in this verse the fundamental truth of 'Yoga-niṣṭhā' has been stated in a nutshell. Determinate Reason (व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धि) forms the very basis of Karmayoga. The highest form of this determinate reason has been enunciated in these verses. It may be said that intellect is not only the mother of the philosophy of 'Karmayoga', but it has given birth to all existing sciences. Intellect is a higher faculty than mind. 'Manas' or mind is the internal organ of perception. The later processes of memory, discrimination, desire and determination are the various aspects of intellect. Everything, whether it concerns our material life or spiritual being, depends upon this intellect. The more one attains perfection of 'Buddhi' as inculcated in the Divine Message of Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa, the more capable he becomes. Although the 'Buddhiyoga', or Philosophy of Reason, preached in the above verse is comprised of five factors, only one or them, viz. the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit (Atmajñāna), or equanimity ('Samatva') is the most important. Hence it is that

these two points have been inculcated in the form of a positive injunction.

The narrow craving for enjoyment of worldly pleasures constitutes a hindrance in the progress of society and the path of spiritual advancement. It cannot be fully extinguished without the help of the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. The state of evenness of intellect arises from the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit alone. It is therefore that those selfless persons who are possessed of scriptural knowledge and wisdom are held in great reverence by every one.

Now let us turn to the mandatory portion of verse 48. But before that it is necessary to ascertain the significance of verse 47, because in this verse it is stated: "Thou hast a right to action alone." The term "right" (अधिकार) is clearly intended to show that according to 'Buddhiyoga', 'Karma'—Action—is not something unauthorised (अप्राप्त) but that which necessarily and naturally devolves upon man. "The fruit of actions is not in thy hands; therefore do not desire it, nor do thou vainly insist on inaction." Having enjoined this, Bhagavān Srī Kṛṣṇa proceeds in the very next verse to preach harmonized action (योगयुक्त कर्म).

An injunction which regulates instinctive actions which are not of a forbidden nature are known in Mīmāṃsā philosophy by the name of 'Niyama-Vidhi. For instance, taking of food is an instinctive action. But, with a view to regulating it, rules are laid down by the 'Dharma-Sāstra'. These rules of the 'Dharma-Sāstra are included in 'Niyama-Vidhi'. Thus the doctrine of 'Karmayoga' has been expounded in the four verses (45 to 48 of Chapter II) referred to above in conformity with all these rules of the 'Mīmāṃsa Sāstra'. These constitute the four pillars of the edifice of 'Karmayoga' just like the first four aphorisms of the 'Vedānta Sūtras', which support the whole structure of Vedānta Philosophy.

Lokamanya Tilak has brought out all the four essentials of 'Karmayoga' in one single verse, namely, the 47th, beginning with "कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते"; but it appears more reasonable to take all the four verses referred to above as completing the structure of 'Karmayoga'. The system of "चतुःसूत्री" has been adopted in the "Vedānta Sūtras". The cardinal principles of 'Vedānta' are dealt with in the first four aphorisms of the "Brahma Sūtras". Hence the word "चतुःसूत्री", has come to mean a collection of four aphorisms or verses propounding a particular doctrine. Thus verses 45 to 48 of Chapter II of the Gītā may be called the "चतुःसूत्री" of the philosophy of 'Karmayoga' as preached in the Gītā. Out of these, verse 45 enunciates the theoretical aspect of 'Buddhiyoga' while the next mentions the fulfilment of life's mission (पूर्णकामता) as the result of 'Buddhiyoga'. The next two verses propound the theory of 'Karma' and the necessity of uniting it with 'Buddhiyoga'. Thus the consummation of life has been shown in the Philosophy of Action. Hence it is more reasonable to call these four verses as the "चतुःसूत्री" of 'Karmayoga'.

'Buddhiyoga' and 'Karmayoga' represent the theory and practice respectively of 'Yoga-niṣṭhā' or dwelling in Yoga. The soul or 'Jīvātmā', Reason, mind, the organs of sense-perception and the organs of action are the five constituent principles of human life. The faculty of reason, being always united with the self-effulgent Atmā or Spirit, borrows illumination from the latter and is thereby able to promote the material and spiritual concerns of man. The faculty of mind follows the lead of the faculty of reason. The organs of sense-perception depend upon the faculty of mind and the organs of action are under the control of the senses. This is how human life is naturally constituted. There being a natural affinity between the senses and their objects, the former are always drawn towards the latter and also carry away with them the mind and reason as if forcibly. If the faculty of reason proves weaker in such cases, the whole apparatus passes

under the influence of the senses. The result is that whereas, as a matter of fact, all activities must be guided and controlled by reason, all of them are now carried on under the direction of the senses, which are themselves actuated by likes and dislikes, so that the life-current of a human being begins to flow in an opposite direction rather than towards God. Every action prompted by likes and dislikes turns out to be sinful. The reason is that 'Rāga' (attraction) and 'Dweṣa' (repulsion) seated in the senses take the human soul in a wrong direction. The possibility of an action resulting in sin is eliminated only when all the actions of an individual are dominated by reason and conform to the Divine Will. Hence it is necessary that the faculty of reason should not be allowed to pass under the influence of the senses. It should ever remain independent and free from any baneful influence. Desire or craving is a characteristic of the faculty of reason. Therefore, suppressing all other desires, one shourld see that the desire of God-realization grows stronger and stronger every moment. An effort in this direction is all that is required on this path. The moment we fix God-realization as our motive, our intellect begins to get purified gradually and becomes powerful and free. The life of one who follows the guidance of such a purified intellect is nothing but virtuous. Only such actions as are performed with a view to worshipping God thereby are really virtuous. This is how the Gītā distinguishes between sin and virtue.

DISINTERESTED ACTION.

The word 'Kāma' in Sanskrit means passion. A passion for devotion to the Supreme Deity is also known as 'Kāma', and actions done with this motive are also called 'Sakāma' or interested actions. But it is wrong to believe that all passions or desires lead to sinful results. Passions or desires which are not contrary to the Divine laws are virtuous and not sinful (vide 'Gītā.' VII. 11). Not only this, such passions lie at the root of 'Paramārtha' or spiritual progress. Therefore, all actions done with a pious motive are disinterested actions. This definition is fully acceptable to the Srutis and Smṛtis alike.

That alone which is conducive to the universal good (सर्वभूतहित) is really good. This is how the Gītā interprets good and evil actions. The same thing has been repeated in the 'Mahābhārata' also at several places. For instance,

पशवश्चैव वृक्षाश्च जनानां हितकारकाः ।
तान् सर्वान् देवपक्षस्थानिति विद्धि शुभानने ॥
शुभाशुभमयो लोकः सर्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।
देवं शुभमिति प्रोक्तमासुरं चाशुभं प्रिये ॥

All that leads to the universal well-being is righteous or divine and all that runs counter to the larger interests of humanity is unrighteous or demoniac. Therefore, the motive of universal good is the only good motive and all actions done with this motive are recognized by the Sāstras as disinterested actions.

DISINTERESTED ACTION AND DEVOTION TO GOD.

Devotion to God itself leads to the realization of His real nature. For, devotion is not possible without knowledge. Material (आधिभौतिक) and spiritual (आध्यात्मिक) knowledge consists in comprehending the manifest and unmanifest aspects of God respectively. It is these which are termed as 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna' in the Gītā. The faculity of reason, when united with this twofold knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, is fully evolved and consequently becomes powerful and free. The faculty of reason, thus purified, is called 'Yogayukta Buddhi' (harmonised reason). The realization of the way in which the Supreme Being manifests Himself in Nature reveals His true nature and convinces one of the fact that this universe itself constitutes the manifest aspect of God. Worship or service of God as manifested in this universe limits the sphere of devotion to the all-pervading Divinity according to human power. Therefore Dharma (the Divine Law) and Society are the highest symbols (प्रतीक)

of the Supreme Spirit. This is the conclusion arrived at by the authors of the various Sāstras. The society is the best image of all images of God. It is therefore held that service rendered to the Supreme Spirit as manifested throughout the social organism and accompanied by a feeling of devotion born of a knowledge of the twofold nature of God is the highest form of devotion propounded in the Gītā.

तप्यन्ते लोकतापेन साधवः प्रायशो जनाः ।
परमाराधनं तद्धि पुरुषस्याखिलात्मनः ॥

The above are the words of Bhagavān Sankara Himself, occurring in 'Srīmad Bhāgavata'. Therefore a devotee who relieves the suffering of humanity, undergoing hardships himself, is the greatest devotee of God and renders the greatest service to the Supreme Spirit. Therefore, actions inspired by the motive of 'Sarvabhūtahita' (universal good) or directed towards the betterment of humanity (Samāja) are classed as disinterested actions. It is in such actions that true devotion to the Supreme Spirit consists. From the above exposition it is proved beyond doubt that disinterested actions and devotion to the Supreme Spirit are one and the same thing.

DISINTERESTED ACTION AND VARNA-DHARMA.

What the Gītā calls सर्वभूतहित or लोकसंग्रह is nothing but universal good or public good. Devotion to the Supreme Spirit as manifested in the social organism and the desire of its betterment are the two fundamental principles on which disinterested action depends. Worship or Desires actuated by pious motives are the inherent virtues of the faculty of reason. Actions guided by such a faculty of reason are recognized in the Sāstras as the highest form of devotion or disinterested action. But what is the programme of devotion or disinterested action ? The ideology of 'Karmayoga' cannot be complete without arriving at a decision on the point. The Gītā therefore has given a decisive answer to this question.

The ancient Vedic Ṛṣis, it will be remembered, instituted the order of Varṇas or castes with an eye to the public good, which lies at the root of disinterested action or devotion. The institution of Aśramas is intended to serve the interests of individuals, while the institution of Varṇas has the larger interests of society in view. The Gītā has differentiated the qualities and functions of Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Sūdras (vide XVIII. 41—44). In verse 42 are enumerated the nine virtues such as the stillness of mind, self-control, etc. This verse is interpreted to mean that it is the duty of a Brāhman to cultivate or develop these virtues in him. This, is, however, not the correct interpretation. The real import of this verse is that it is obligatory on every Brāhman to strive ceaselessly to promote these moral virtues in the organic body of the society or the nation and to spread the two kinds of knowledge: Material (आधिभौतिक) and spiritual (आध्यात्मिक). It is evident from this that the real duty of a Brāhman as the leader of the other three classes is to educate the world by promoting the cause of knowledge and morality. Verses 43 and 44 should also be interpreted in the same way. The sum and substance of these verses is that out of the four sets of duties allotted among the four orders or castes, viz. educating the world, administration, production and distribution of necessaries of life and manual labour, that which a man does according to his intellectual capacity and disposition constitutes his Varṇa-Dharma, to whatever caste he may belong by birth. Every one should follow his 'Varṇa-Dharma' (the duties devolving upon him by virtue of his Varṇa) according to his qualities and occupation, while at the same time abiding by his individual 'Dharma' as determined by the caste in which he has been born. This is very essential. This is the 'Samāja-Dharma' (Dharma of the society) or 'Rāṣṭra-Dharma' ('Dharma' of a nation) as propounded in the above verses. This is what has been called by the name of 'Swadharma' (one's own duty) in the third chapter. This 'Swadharma' is to be maintained at all costs, even at the cost of one's life. This is the unequivocal

teaching of the Gītā. Thus every action of an altruistic nature, performed with the pure motive of worshipping God thereby, leads to material advancement (अभ्युदय) of the society as well as Supreme Bliss or Liberation (मोक्ष), thus fulfilling the purpose of human life. This, in brief, is 'Karmayoga', the Philosophy of Action. Devotion, knowledga and application to duty—these are the fundamental principles of 'Karmayoga.' Hence the practice of 'Varṇa-Dharma' enunciated above is the programme of action followed herein. The whole of this exposition is summed up in the following verse:—

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥
(XVIII. 46)

"He from whom is the evolution of (all) beings,by whom all this is pervadad, by worshipping Him in his natural duty, i. e., 'Varṇa-Dharma' man attains perfection".

Every one should therefore perform the duties devolving upon him by virtue of his 'Varṇa' with love and devotion to the all-pervading Supreme Spirit, and in a spirit of dedication to Him who is also the creator of the Universe. This is true worship of God, which gradually leads to the perfection of 'Buddhiyoga' as a stepping-stone to liberation. Here the Lord has totally dispelled the doubts expressed by Arjuna in the very first chapter. Arjuna attached great importance to individual 'Dharma' and even more than that to 'Kula-Dharma' (Dharma attaching to a family), which is an expanded form of individual 'Dharma'. But in the end he was convinced of his error and admitted that 'Varṇa-Dharma' or 'Rāṣṭra-Dharma' was superior to 'Kula-Dharma' and hence governed it. True worship of God consisted in following one's 'Varṇa-Dharma' according to the fourfold division mentioned in the Gītā, in a pure spirit. This form of worship was conducive to liberation for the individual and to material advancement for the nation; hence it could as well be called 'Rāṣṭra-Dharma'. Individual 'Dharma' or even 'Kula-Dharma' paled into insignificance before this. Hence it was perferable to stick to 'Rāṣṭra-Dharma' with one's reason united with God, when there was a conflict between 'individual Dharma' and 'Rāṣṭra-Dharma'.

Now 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna', in the sense of knowledge of the manifest and unmanifest aspects of God, have been mentioned in the Gītā more than once, and they are very essential for the perfect purification or highest evolution of reason. The Gītā mentions a number of intellectual virtues from different motives, 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna' being the chief among them. To say that all other virtues are intended to develop these virtues will not be wide of the mark. Hence it is that Chapter XIII contains a mention of all virtues supplemetary to knowledge, rather than of knowledge itself. 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna' are comprised within the true nature of God; hence the phrase "Nature of God" is taken to include in it both 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna', the divine virtues (दैवी सम्पद्) and all the elements of 'Buddhiyoga'. It is in view of this fact that the first half of the last-quoted verse goes on to describe the true nature of God. Although the description is very brief, the words used therein are very appropriate. This shows that Srī Bhagavān has purposely used such a phraseology to give a true idea of what 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna' is. The word "Swakarma" occurring in the latter half of the verse denotes 'Varṇa-Dharma' in the main; for the same has been spoken of in the verses preceding it and this verse also occurs in the same context. Thus it is conclusively proved that 'Varṇa-Dharma', practised with an intellect united with 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna' both, is the only way to attain salvation and this alone constitutes the path of Action or 'Karmayoga'.

Gita-Saptasara.

By A 'Deena'.

The sacred scriptures, while prescribing Sādhanas or spiritual exercises, generally lay down as the first step the negative deeds or abstention called निषेध and this is followed by positive acts or virtues called विधि or performances. After the observance of these two the practices leading direct to the goal do come in. In the well-known eightfold steps of *Yoga* the first step *Yama* is negative deed or abstention (निषेध) followed by the *Niyama*, the second step, which is a positive performance called विधि. The Smṛtis also lay great emphasis upon these two in succession. Likewise the *Bhagavadgītā* has also its own abstention (निषेध) and performance (विधि), followed by concluding practices leading to the goal. These orders must be scrupulously followed. Without practice of abstention from vices, performances of virtues are of little use and without accomplishing these two foundation-steps, practices leading to the goal would prove infructuous.

The three chief abstentions.

The chief abstention (निषेध) in the *Gītā* is threefold, viz. abstention from *Kāma i. e.* lust or desire for sensual gratification, *Krodha*, meaning anger or wrath, and *Lobha*, which is greed or dishonest desire. *Lobha* or greed is included in *Kāma* and hence in the *Gītā*, in the beginning, the twin imperfections of काम and क्रोध have been characterised as all-consuming, all-polluting, insatiable and obscuring wisdom (III. 37—39). They impel commission of sins (III. 36). From *Kāma* proceeds wrath or anger and from the latter *Moha* or delusion, which is the cause of *Lobha* or greed (II. 63). Further from *Kāma* proceeds fear, *i. e.*, care of preservation of the objects of desire (*Kāma*) and fear of its destruction. Hence getting rid of these three, काम, कोध and भय (fear) has been emphasised (IV. 10). To gain equanimity of mind and happiness these two, *Kāma* and *Krodha*, must be controlled before death (V. 23). The chief product of Rajas generally is *Lobha* or greed (XIV. 17). In Chapter 16, which enumerates divine (दैवी) as well as devilish (आसुरी) qualities (संपत्ति), the Lord in verse 21 emphatically lays down abstentions from the three vices mentioned above, viz. काम, क्रोध and लोभ, which are described as the three doors to *Naraka* (the infernal region), and they are further described as destroyers of the very self and must therefore be renounced by all means, as said by the Lord. Here the three chief abstentions from vices have been clearly enumerated from which almost all sins do proceed. In the 18th chapter, which summarises the teachings of the *Gītā*, it has been stated that, in order to effect union with the Divine, casting off these three, viz. काम, क्रोध and लोभ is highly necessary (XVIII. 53). *Parigraha* here really means greed; violence and arrogance mentioned there are forms of *Kāmā*; and egoism is destroyed by devotion.

There are two methods to control these evil propensities. The first is abstention from thinking of the sensual and tempting objects which give rise to them (II. 62-63) and the second is to consider and meditate oneself as the self or consciousness above senses, mind

At the parting of ways.

Those who have their minds fixed on Me, I speedily lift out of the ocean of Death.

and *Buddhi* which are material and thus to control the lower by the higher Self.

The three positive performances.

Likewise in the 17th and 18th chapters the three chief positive performances or विधि-साधना have been mentioned and summarised. They are (1) *Yajña* or self-sacrifice, (2) *Dāna* or charity and (3) *Tapas* or self-control. These are styled by the Lord as purifiers and their practice ordained as obligatory duty which must in no case be given up—this is the Lord's own considered opinion (XVIII. 3, 5-6.)

Yajña is described in the third chapter as discharge of debts mostly to Devas and Ṛṣis as duty by practice of *Homa* and study of scriptures respectively as well as control of senses, Prāṇas (vital airs) and the mind.

Charity has been described in Chapter XVII, verses 20 to 22. Charity offered as duty to a deserving needy person at the proper time and place without wish to get anything in return is considered the best (XVII. 20). But in Chapter IX. 27 it is said that even charity should be offered in the name and on behalf of the Lord as His work and for Him.

Tapasyā has been defined in Chapter XVII (verses 14 to 17). *Tapasyā* includes शौच (inner and outer cleanliness), *Brahmacharya* (sense-control, especially celibacy), truth-speaking, practice of harmlessness, service to the elders, altruism, equilibrium of mind, self-control, etc. In fact, all ethical deeds are included in *Tapas*. It is like *Niyama* of *Yoga* except devotion to the Lord; which has been rightly called the last principal step in the *Gītā* and divorced from it.

Devotion to the Lord is the last and the seventh.

This has been beautifully described and summarised in verse 34 of Chapter IX, which runs thus:—

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥

The Lord said:—

(1) Merge thy mind in Me; (2) be devoted to Me; (3) sacrifice to Me; (4) prostrate thyself before Me; (5) be harmonised thus in the Supreme Self; (6) surrender to Me as thy supreme goal and then (7) thou shalt come unto Me. Seven steps have been clearly laid down in the above verse, which is so important that it has been nearly repeated in Chapter XVIII, verse 65.

The above constitute the seven essentials of *Bhagavadgītā*.

Gita: The Only Guide.

Gītā is the fountain-head of joy eternal. It is the safest guide to the highest Truth. Gītā reveals to us the supreme Reality, embodying as it does the Knowledge of 'Brahma'. It lays open the deepest and the sublimest mysteries about here and hereafter; it has for its author a no less celebrated sage than Maharṣi Vedavyāsa.

—*Prince Dara Shikoh.*

Greatness of the Gita.

By Ramdayal Mojumdar, M. A.

Sri Gitā is revered throughout the world to-day. The languages of almost all the civilized peoples have the book in translation. In compliance with the request of the editor, I wish to submit a few words on this great work.

The Lord has said:—

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

"Howsoever men resort to Me, even so do I welcome them (with offers of the fruit desired)".

The more an aspirant after spiritual perfection, well-versed in the sacred traditional lore, advances on the path of discipline, through strict conformity to the mandates of the Lord, the more he feels the uplifting influence of this wonderful book, which embodies, as it were, the essence of Vedic wisdom, and holds within it the secret of divine peace.

Read the *Gitā* once and you will see what precious treasures are stored up therein—you will feel as if she is assuring you with prospects of an endless character. Read the book for a second time and you will see new beauty opened before your eyes. Read again and you will find the work more and more fascinating—as if there is no end of beauty and bliss.

Sri Gita is an embodiment of *Brahma*—she is all-wisdom. In whatever manner a devotee—be he of any of the four classes recognized in the Śāstras, viz., the suffering (आर्त), the seeker after knowledge (जिज्ञासु), the self-interested (अर्थार्थी) and the wise (ज्ञानी)—worships her, she leads him slowly but steadily into the heart of quiescent eternal plane of beauty behind the commotions and agitations of this world—into the secret recess of everlasting peace which underlies every movement of this world.

Sri Gitā is all-bliss. Whoever among her ardent votaries continues to proceed with single-minded devotion along the spiritual path, and becomes seized with a passion for its vision, she obliges him by a gradual divestment of her outer vestures and revelation of her true self which is all bliss and sweetness to his enraptured sight.

Sri Gitā is all-playful. It is as difficult to follow her as to pursue the course of *Māyā*, the Cosmic Actress, dancing on the stage of this universe. Once you find a vision of *Sri Gitā* just before your eyes, the next moment it vanishes, like Arjuna's chariot driven by Subhadrā; like the lightning now appearing for a time and again vanishing amongst clouds; like the fish in deep water once playing on the surface and again hiding in the depth of waters. Once you feel you have seen, and immediately after you miss her. What a wonder is it to follow *Sri Gitā*!

Just as divine peace reveals itself behind the commotions of *Māyā*, in the same way the Holy Upaniṣad is enshrined as a goddess under the garment

of the *Gītā*. In short, the beauties of *Śrī Gītā* strike wonder on all the planes of existence, viz. the physical, the mental and the spiritual.

Needless to say that it is extremely difficult for weak creatures like ourselves, with little merit or devotion, to have a full vision of the Supreme Reality, which is at once gross and possessed of all degrees of subtleties; which appears as a wonderful human being under the influence of *Māyā;* which is enthroned in the heart of the entire creation, both sentient and insentient; and as such shines in all the forms in which the world is manifested; and which at the end of creation, brought on by Its own power, drinks off, as it were, the poison of this manifested universe, and shines alone in Its own transcendent glory

To study the *Gītā* is not the work of a single life, but that of a series of lives, until a *Jīva* is liberated in the body, and the drop of the *Jīva-chaitanya* is merged into the ocean of *Brahma-chaitanya*.

It has been already said that it is not possible to understand *Srī Gītā* until her mercy is forthcoming.

A refugee has to obey the protector. If we take refuge in the *Gītā*, we must obey the injunctions laid down therein. To obtain the blessings of the Lord one should, first and foremost of all, work according to the Lord's commandments.

Where should one find the Lord's commandments? You get them in the Vedas, in all religious literature, and more particularly in the *Gītā*.

If we would only take out the commandments from the *Gītā* and obey heart and soul one or more of them according to our individual capacity, there is no doubt we shall realize her mercy and feel her uplifting influence.

We treat *Srī Gītā* as living and not as a mere book. The Lord has said: 'गीता मे हृदयं पार्थ'—*Gītā* is My heart, O Pārtha.' That which is the word of the Lord is not to be deemed as lifeless. Life manifests itself through matter. Although the letters of the scripture joined together form words only, the Deity manifesting itself through them, as the sense of those words, is the *Gītā*. Again, we have to observe that a name and the bearer of that name are one and the same. The *Gītā* is identical with *Brahma* both immutable and cosmic.

She is the soul while the outer covering is only *Māyā*. The inner heart is *Ātmadeva* or *Atmadevī*, just as you choose. Also it is said:—

आत्मा एवासि मातः

That is to say the *Gītā* is the *Ātmā* in the *Jīva* as well as in the movable and the immovable world. It should be particularly remembered that *Brahma* is at once सगुण and निर्गुण, at once *Ātmā* and an *Avatāra* (incarnation). The material vesture is the creation of *Māyā*. The inner heart is the Deity, *Ātmadeva* or *Ātmadevī*.

For the fulfilment of life's ideal the injunction of the scriptures is that even a single moment of life should not be spent without the thought of God or the Self—क्षणमात्रमपि देवीस्मरणं विना वा देवस्मरणं विना न क्षपणीयम्.

The Scriptures lay down in reference to the names of the *Ātmadeva* or *Ātmadevī*:—

गीतानामानि वक्ष्यामि गुह्यानि शृणु पाण्डव ।
कीर्तनात्सर्वपापानि विलयं यान्ति तत्क्षणात् ॥

गंगा गीता च सावित्री सीता सत्या पतिव्रता ।
ब्रह्मावलिर्ब्रह्मविद्या त्रिसंध्या मुक्तिगेहिनी ॥
अर्द्धमात्रा चिदानन्दा भवघ्नी भ्रान्तिनाशिनी ।
वेदत्रयी परानन्दा तत्त्वार्थज्ञानमंजरी ॥
इत्येतानि जपन्नित्यं नरो निश्चलमानसः ।
ज्ञानसिद्धिं लभेन्नित्यं तथान्ते परमं पदम् ॥

"O Arjuna, listen; I relate to thee the secret names of the *Gītā*. Recital of these names has the immediate effect of destroying sins. One who with a calm and tranquil mind recites every day the names—such as Gangā, Gītā, Sāvitrī, Sītā, Satyā, Pativratā, Brahmāvali, Brahmavidyā, Trisandhyā, Muktigehinī, Ardhamātrā, Chidānāndā, Bhavaghnī, Bhrāntināśinī, Vedatrayī, Parānandā, Tattvārthajñānamañjarī—will obtain *Jñānasiddhi* for all time, and will finally reside in the *Parama pada* beyond the three Padas, which is all-quiet unmoved Bliss."

In regard to the *Gītā* as the source of all wisdom, all religion, the Lord has expressed Himself in the following words:—

गीता मे हृदयं पार्थ गीता मे सारमुत्तमम् ।
गीता मे ज्ञानमत्युग्रं गीता मे ज्ञानमव्ययम् ॥
गीता मे चोत्तमस्थानं गीता मे परमं पदम् ।
गीता मे परमं गुह्यं गीता मे परमो गुरुः ॥

"The *Gītā* is My heart, My essence, My subtle and imperishable wisdom; the *Gītā* is My beauteous residence, My final abode, My esoteric spot, the *Gītā* is My highest preceptor or *Guru*; the *Gītā* is My great guide."

Such is the sacred work that the Lord considers as the highest preceptor. What error can there be in treating such a scripture as full of life ?

Finally,

कृष्णो जानाति वै सम्यक् किञ्चित् कुन्तीसुतः फलम् ।
व्यासो वा व्यासपुत्रो वा याज्ञवल्क्योऽथ मैथिलः ॥

"Verily does the Lord Kṛṣṇa only know of *Śrī Gītā* in full. Arjuna has a partial knowledge of her. Similar is the case with the Ṛṣis Vyāsa and Śuka, and the Yogīs Yājñavalkya and Janaka". How far will the Jīvas of this Kali Age, vitiated by sins as they are, be able to realize the great *Gītā* ? Still we are unable to abstain from an effort to understand—under whose inspiration the Lord alone knows ?

O *Atmadeva*, O Refuge of the helpless, in whatever way You lead us on, be pleased to grant that in all our strivings we look up to Your bliss more than anything else, that ultimately we may throw off all fruits of desire and obey Your precepts and receive Your protection. You are the only support of all in life and death. O Reliever of the meek, and the suppressed, O Protector of the sinful, O Ocean of Mercy, we know not what to say; we do not know even to offer our prayers. See that we may have eternal rest at Your lotus-feet. O Ineffable Being, O Infinite formed, Self-willed Incarnate, may we with fervour of mind be favoured with a vision of Your three forms and be blessed with Your incessant thought ! This is our prayer.

The Essential Unity of the Three Margas.

By Dasharatha Sharma, M. A.

If regard be had to the temperaments of people, they can be classified under three heads. Some are emotional, others intellectual, while still others, guided by the urge of action seated deep in their heart, find satisfaction in serving humanity. What satisfies one does not equally satisfy the other. Recognizing this fundamental truth, * the *Gītā* formulates the theory of the three Mārgas, the *Jñāna-Mārga*, the *Bhakti-Mārga*, and the *Karma-Mārga*. Sometimes it gives the first place to *Jñāna*, and at others to *Bhakti* and *Karma*, showing thereby that it regards the three ways as equally efficacious. †

But one naturally questions as to why the *Gītā* should have reached this conclusion. If salvation was to be had by *Jñāna*, how could it be had by *Bhakti* also. Different causes should naturally have different effects. But the answer is not far to seek. It is to be found in the essential unity and the synthetic character of these three methods. None excludes the other. These three, though superficially different, are one at bottom.

* सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥

(III. 33)

† *cf.* ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥
अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वान्येभ्य उपासते ।
तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः ॥

(XIII. 24-25)

What is true *Jñāna* after all ? Not surely the mere intellectual cognition of oneness with *Brahma*; for, if it were so, many a student of Vedānta philosophy would gain salvation in a single day. The person whose actions are not disinterested, and who does not love humanity, seeing it as non-different from himself, is not a *Jñānī*. He is still under the influence of error. The true *Jñānī* is also the true *Bhakta*.* Finding that philosophy cannot finally solve the riddle of the world, he turns in all humility to *Puruṣottama*, through whose grace alone one can get through the intricate maze of *Māyā*. † Śankarāchārya was a true *Jñāni*, and he was therefore also a philosopher, devotee, and worker in one. Not merely did he give us the wonderful system of his philosophy, but also the soul-stirring Stotras which none but a true *Bhakta* could have composed. That his life was all work would be admitted by any and every one who knows anything about his campaign for revivifying Hinduism.

* चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥
तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥

(VII. 16-17)

† दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥

(VII. 14)

Similarly, the *Bhakti-Mārga,* too, contains the essentials of the two other methods taught by the *Gītā.* In lower stages the devotee's love is transferred to some individual, or to some minor god or goddess. But, with the higher types of *Bhakti,* the circle of love is wide enough to embrace all the world. The devotee's love overflows the small and restricted confines of family, village, and country, and expresses itself in the love of all. In this stage alone can *Bhakti* or the feeling of love and devotion in a man's heart be regarded as fully developed. Such a devotee unconsciously and without any deliberate effort realizes the truth of oneness with all. Seeing Vāsudeva everywhere, he transcends the ethical problems facing the ordinary man, and finds himself निर्वैरः (free from animosity) and संगवर्जितः (devoid of attachment)—XI. 55. To such devotees alone is vouchsafed the vision of the 'विश्वरूप' or World-form of the Supreme.* What the *Jñānī* gets at as the result, not of intellect but intuition, is got also by the *Bhakta* through an ecstatic condition which must in its fundamental nature be very much akin to intuition. In both, the experience of the beatific vision is suffused through and through with an indescribable *Ānanda*, which no earthly experience can equal, or perhaps even really resemble.

With *Karma*, again, we find the same story. But it is not every work that leads to *Mukti.* Work, not to be binding, should be disinterested. There should be no feeling of egoism about it. Disinterested work leads duly to *Jñāna* and true *Bhakti*, and thereby to *Mokṣa.**

It might therefore be concluded that whichever of these methods be pursued, the effect and therefore the final result is the same. Each leads to the discarding of selfish actions, devotion to the Supreme, and to the seeing of *Brahma* everywhere; and, these three being the only conditions for *Mokṣa*, one *Mārga* is as efficacious as the other.

* भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥

(XI. 54)

See also the preceding verse.

* न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥
श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥

(IV. 37-38)

The Gītā is a bouquet composed of the beautiful flowers of spiritual truths collected from the Upaniṣads.

—*Swami Vivekanand*

Gita: the Bestower of Immortality.

By Swami Sivananda Saraswati.

I again and again remind you, Dear Friends ! that the Goal of life, the *summum bonum* of existence is *Self-Realization* or attainment of God-consciousness. You have taken this body for this purpose alone. You have evidently forgotten this vital point on account of the force of *Avidyā* (ignorance), *Rāga*, *Kāma* and *Moha*. Now open your eyes. Wake up. Gird up your loins for fighting against ignorance and acquiring *Ātma-jñāna*, which alone will secure you freedom from the Saṃsāric wheel of birth and death.

Peace, Bliss, *Ānanada*, *Sukha*, *Jñāna*, *Ātmā*, *Brahma*, *Chaitanya*, *Puruṣa*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Tattwa, *Parama Dhama*, *Nirvāṇa*, *Parama Pada*, *Gītā*—are all synonymous terms only.

Bhagavadgītā contains the Divine nectar. It contains the essence of Vedas and Upaniṣads. It is like *Chintāmaṇi*, *Kalpataru* or *Kāmadhenu*. You can milk out anything from it. It contains 700 Ślokas. It is a book of eternity, of all ages and of all climes. It is not a catch-penny book which has a life like that of a mushroom. *Gītā* has been my constant companion in life. It is a *Vade mecum* for all.

A close study of *Gītā* and a life in the spirit of *Gītā* will confer on you bliss, peace and immortality, solace, spiritual strength, eternal satisfaction, infinite bliss and highest knowledge.

The knowledge of *Gītā* was revealed by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chandra, Lord of Yogīs, to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra. Arjuna attained knowledge of Self, through the Grace of his friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa, on the battle-field within an hour and a half through intuition and revelation. His *Moha*, fear and confusion vanished entirely through the teachings of *Bhagavadgītā*. Though Lord Kṛṣṇa taught *Gītā* to Arjuna His teachings are intended for men of all climes and of different temperaments at all times. That is the beauty of the *Gītā*.

There are countless commentaries on the *Gītā* at the present moment. A volume can be written for each *śloka*. A busy man with *Karmic* tendencies will be highly benefited by studying the commentary of Sri Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *Gītā Rahasya*; a man of devotion by studying Śrídhara's commentary; a man of reason and will by studying Śrī Śankara's commentary, an English translation of which is available in the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.

The first six chapters of the *Gīta* deal with *Karma-Yoga*. The second six chapters treat of *Bhakti-Yoga*; the last six chapters deal with *Jñāna-Yoga*. The first six chapters represent "*Tat*"-*pada* of "*Tat Twam Asi*" *Mahāvākya*. The second six chapters represent "*Twam*"-*pada*. The last six chapters represent "*Asi*"-*pada*. The sixth chapter deals with *Rāja Yoga*. The second chapter treats of

the Immortal Átmā. The fourth chapter deals with *Prāṇāyāma.*

1. Constant remembrance and practice of the teachings of ślokas 19, 20, 23 and 24 of Chapter II will confer on you Immortality and will remove fear and *Dehādhyāsa* (identification with the body).

2. Constant remembrance and practice of the teachings of *Sloka* 22 of Chapter V, *Śloka* 8 of Chap. XIII, and *Sloka* 38 of Chap. XVIII will induce *Vairāgya.*

3. Life in the spirit of Ślokas 71 of Chap. II; Śloka 39 of Chap. IV will bring Supreme Peace.

4. Ślokas 27, 28 of Chap. V; Ślokas 11, 12, 13, 14 and 26 of Chap. VI; Ślokas 8, 10, 12, 13 and 14 of Chap. VIII; Ślokas 8, 9 and 10 of Chap. XII; Ślokas 51, 52 and 53 of Chap. XVIII; Śloka 34 of Chap. IX deal with *Yogic Sādhana* or Spiritual *Abhyāsa* for Self-Realization.

The philosophy of *Gītā* begins with Śloka 11 of Chap. II. *Śloka* 66 of Chap. XVIII is the most important *śloka* of *Gītā*:— "Abandon all duties, come unto Me alone for shelter; sorrow not, I will liberate thee from all sins." Adwaitis explain this *śloka* thus: "Give up *Jīva-Bhāvanā.* Develop *"Aham Brahmāsmi"* *Bhāvanā.* You will get liberation." Arjuna asks Lord Kṛṣṇa: "Tell me decisively, what may be the better. My mind is confused as to duty. I am Thy disciple, suppliant to Thee. Teach me." Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives his answer to this question of Arjuna in Śloka 66 of Chap. XVIII.

Glory, Glory to *Gītā*. Glory, Glory to Lord Kṛṣṇa who has placed *Gītā* for men of this world for attaining *Śreya* or *Hitātaā*. May His Blessings be upon you all. May *Gītā* be your centre, ideal and Goal. Blessed is the man who studies the *Gītā* daily. Twice blessed is he who lives in the spirit of *Gītā*. Thrice blessed is he who has realized the Knowledge of *Gītā*, *Ātma Jñāna* !

Gita: the Philosophy of Highest Devotion.

The Gita is acknowledged and revered as the highest and best book of 'Dharma' mainly because it gives an unbiassed exposition of the philosophy of Action, Devotion and Knowledge. No other book oh earth establishes such a sweet harmony.

............Such an unparalleled religion, such a wonderful synthesis is to found in the Gita only. I know not if such an exposition has ever been made in any religion, in any country and at any time.

In all the world such an excellent and splendid philosophy of Devotion is not to be found.

—*Bonkim Chandra Chattopadhyaya*

The number of verses attributed to the various characters figuring in the Gita in order of Adhyayas.

Chapter.	Dhṛtarāṣṭra.	Sañjaya.	Arjuna.	Lord Srī Kṛṣṇa.	Total No.
I	1	25	21	...	47
II	...	3	6	63	72
III	...	...	3	40	43
IV	...	...	1	41	42
V	...	...	1	28	29
VI	...	...	5	42	47
VII	...	...	...	30	30
VIII	...	...	2	26	28
IX	...	...	...	34	34
X	...	...	7	35	42
XI	...	8	33	14	55
XII	...	...	1	19	20
XIII	...	...	...	34	34
XIV	...	...	1	26	27
XV	...	...	...	20	20
XVI	...	...	...	24	24
XVII	...	...	1	27	28
XVIII	...	5	2	71	78
	1	41	84	474	700

Ourselves.

Full three hundred and sixty-five days have rolled away since the "Kalyana-Kalpataru" saw the light of the day. With much diffidence we placed the 'God Number' and subsequent ordinary numbers in the hands of our readers. Fully conscious of our manifold limitations and shortcomings, we knew how hard it was to conduct a journal which stands for the propagation of spiritual ideas and love of God. Love of God is not a thing to be propagated through expositions and dissertations. Man can know and feel attracted towards Him only when He Himself in His infinite mercy opens his inner eyes and unfolds His soul-captivating charms to him.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो
न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्य-
स्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूँ स्वाम् ॥

Kathopanisad

But God fulfils Himself in many ways. We felt within our conscience that we have His 'yea' for our humble work. He has been unceasingly showering His blessings on us. With all reverence and love we bow down to Him in whom we live, move and have our being. Saints and sages, seers and thinkers, not of this country alone but of all other parts of the world, have their good wishes and active sympathy for our enterprise and it is due to all this that during the very first year of its career the "Kalyana-Kalpataru" has been appreciated by eminent scholars and representative journals of India and abroad. Though the number of subscribers of the "Kalyana-Kalpataru" is very meagre in comparison to the circulation of its prototype, the Hindi Kalyan, which has reached the figure of 26,000 this year, yet, the modest beginning it has made is quite encouraging and hopeful looking to the number of months it has been in existence, and this has emboldened us to carry on our mission more enthusiastically than heretofore. Our readers will be interested to know that our magazine has been patronized by people belonging to different faiths in different countries and we earnestly hope that its popularity will grow from more to more day by day.

To-day we are presenting our readers with the 'Gītā Number' as the inaugural Special Number for this year. The less said of our inexperience and inability the better. We have, however, the rare honour and proud privilege of being connected with some of the eminent sages and Ṛṣis of the day who have always been very gracious to us and at whose sacred feet we ever hope to learn. They have very kindly contributed articles for this Special Number and we are sure that their contributions will prove of permanent use to ourselves no less than our readers. We bow down to our revered saints in all reverence and humility.

Amongst the articles of this number some very valuable articles have been translated from the Hindi Kalyan. We have been amply helped in translation work by our respected friend, Pandit L. N. Garde, and we are very much thankful to him for his ungrudging

and zealous cooperation. We received as well some articles in Bengali for this Special Number, which were translated in to English by Mr. S. C. Guha, and we offer him our cordial thanks for the same. We feel much indebted to our numerous sympathisers and well-wishers who have been helping us all along in so many ways and hope they will continue to do so in future as well. Our thanks are no less due to our esteemed friend and colleague, Pandit Bhuvaneshwar Nath Misra 'Madhava', M. A., who has rendered very valuable help to us in the discharge of our editorial duties.

Last of all we have to add a word of gratitude to our saintly and learned contributors, without whose generous help we could not bring out this 'Gītā Number'. We cannot adequately express our humble gratitude to His Holiness Srī 1108 Jagadguru Sankarāchārya Srī Bharati Krishna Tirthaji Maharaj of Sri Govardhan Pitha, Puri, who has made time to contribute to our journal out of his very very busy programme and religious tour throughout the length and breadth of India. Our honoured friend Dr. M. H. Syed, M. A., Ph. D., D. Lit. of the Oriental Department of the University of Allahabad sent his valuable contribution despite his keeping indifferent health. Sri Krishna Prema Bhikhari, who has dedicated his all in the service of Bhagavan Sri Kṛṣṇa, wrote his esteemed paper at an incredibly short notice and finished it while it was going to be midnight in order to enable it to reach our office in time. We find no words to express our feeling of deep gratitude to the rest of our contributors also all of whom wrote for our magazine at great personal inconvenience to themselves. We know, it is simply out of disinterested love for the magazine that they have taken all this trouble.

We are as well grateful to our selfless friends and sympathisers here as well as abroad who have all long been helping us in securing new subscribers to the journal without any recompense beyond the mental satisfaction derived from a sense of having done their duty by a worthy cause.

"Whatsoever thou doest, whatsoever thou eatest, whatsoever thou offerest, do thou that as an offering unto Me." These are the words of the Lord. Do thy duty with your heart and soul in Me—this is the loving mandate of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa through the *Gītā*, who is the Eternal Mother of mankind. Let us worship our Hari in our work and let our soul be ever open to the teachings of the *Gītā*, because the Lord Himself has said—'गीता मे हृदयं पार्थ' (*Gītā* is My very heart!). Through *Gītā* alone is the salvation of humanity. Mother *Gītā* alone will lead us

From untruth to Truth,
From darkness to Light,
From death to Immortality.

ॐ तत्सत् श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु

—*Editor.*

Gita Library.

Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā commands to-day the spontaneous homage of mankind. Men of all religions and countries bow down to it in love and reverence. Thousands of years have flown down since the Lord sang this Song of Life; but, since *Gītā* is eternally fresh and fragrant, it serves even to-day as a beacon-light to so many wavering souls in the ocean of the world. Life itself is a great battle and it cannot be successfully fought without the direct help and guidance of Śrī Bhagavān. Gītā is the Song of Śrī Bhagavān Himself and hence it is that all over the world people have cast off all restrictions and barriers of their sects and creeds and have run to it God-intoxicated, to drink deep at the fountain-head of all-bliss.

This worldwide popularity of the *Gītā* is unique in manifold ways. Its appeal is to the man within and not to external forms. Through *Gītā* the Eternal Kṛṣṇa speaks to the soul of man and hence it is that, to satisfy the hunger of the soul, man is naturally drawn to the Song Celestial. There is no organised society * or missionary institution for the purpose of popularising the *Gītā*. We are aware, the Bible too has been translated in almost all the languages of the world; but, without meaning to cast any reflection on the intrinsic merits of the Bible, for which we have all reverence in our heart, it may be mentioned here that at the back of its popularity is, as is known to all, more the zeal of missionaries than the inner thirst of the people in whose language this book has been translated. But the *Gītā* has no such backing. People have embraced it, for they have felt an irresistible call from within to listen to the Lord. Not

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* We have great pleasure in announcing that a 'Gita Society' has recently been founded under the presidency of Justice Sir Manmathnath Mukerjee, Kt. of the Calcutta High Court. Syt. Baba Raghavadas has kindly offered his services as its secretary. The sole purpose of the Society is to propagate Gita literature here as well as abroad and to popularise it amongest schools and colleges of India and other countries, so that people of different faiths, while adhering to their own religions, may mould their lives according to the teachings of the Gita. Gita's appeal is not to any particular religion, caste or country, but to the humanity at large. Some of the members of the society are the following:—

Syt. Syamaprasad Mukerjee, M. A., B. L., Bar-at-Law, Vice-chancellor, Cal. Univ.
Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Kt., Vice-chancellor, Andhra University.
Sir Badridas Goenka, Kt.
Syt. Jugal Kishore Birla.
Syt. Gouri Shankar Goenka.
Syt. Basant Kumar Chatterjee, M. A.
Syt. Krishnalal M. Jhaveri, ex-Chief Judge.
Dr. M. H. Syed, M. A., Ph. D., D. Lit.
Mrs. Sophia Wadia.
Dr. I. J. S. Taraporewalla, B. A., Ph. D.
Syt. Jayadayal Goyandka.
Syt. Jwalaprasad Kanodia.
Syt. Hanumanprasad Poddar, etc, etc.

only that. People of all religions receive or revere it as the book of their own religion.

A Gita Library has been started at 30, Banstolla Gulli, Calcutta, purely with the idea of having a collection of the numerous editions of the *Gītā* published with or without translation in so many languages of the world. We have, by this time, come to know that as many as 2500 editions of the *Gītā* have so far been published in thirty-six languages, out of which we have, in our collections, 1100 editions of twenty-seven different languages. We have also printed a list of such editions along with other literature bearing on the *Gītā*, as well as manuscript copies of the same traced at different places or collected in the Library.

The list is no doubt incomplete as every day new translations and new editions are being brought out. But a rough idea can be formed thereby as to the universal popularity of the *Gītā*. This collection owes its existence, in particular, to the indefatigable zeal of the worthy and selfless secretary of the said library—Syt. Ramnarsinha Harlalka.

We have specially to request the publishers and authors of Gita Literature all over the world to supply the library with a copy of their publications so as to enable us to keep the list up-to-date and the collection as complete as possible. Any information regarding the literature on the *Gītā* can be received from or supplied to the Gita Press, Gorakhpur, or Gita Library, 30, Banstolla Gulli, Calcutta, where a revised and enlarged list of Gita literature can be had.

Besides the glosses of Śankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa and other Acharyas, we have a very rich galaxy of expositions of the philosophy of *Gītā* by very many eminent scholars of Sanskrit. One thing must needs be mentioned here. Even before Śankara many Bhāṣyas on *Gītā* must have been written, of which we find only a reference in the works of these Āchāryas. Besides the hundreds of editions in Hindi, the *Gītā* has been translated in all the different vernaculars of India, viz., Bengali, Marathi, Gujerati, Uria, Assamese, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Canarese, Mewari, Marwari, Sindhi, Gurmukhi, Urdu, Garhwali, Nepali, etc., etc. We are giving below a concise list of the translations of the *Gītā* in languages of the other parts of the world.

1. Bhagavadgita or The Sacred Lay- 'Trubnar's Oriental Series' by John Davis, M.A.; From: Trubnar & Co. London; Ed. I-1882; Rs. 12/-;pp.210.
2. Essays on the Gita (Vols. 2) by Yogiraja Sri Aurobindo; Pub. Arya Publishing House, College Street, Calcutta; Vol. 1-Edition—II-1926; Vol. 2—Edition I-1928; Rs. 12/8/-; pp. 900.
3. Bhagavadgita. (A Study—with Text in Devanagari) by S. D. Buddhiraj, M. A., LL.B., Chief Judge, Kashmere; Pub. Ganesh and Co., Madras; Edition I-1927; Rs. 5/-; pp. 550.
4. Bhagavadgita or The song of the Blessed One (India's Favourite Bible) by Prof. Franklin Edgerton; Pub. The Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago (U. S. A.); Edition. I-1925; Rs. 3/8/-; pp.110.

5. Bhagavadgita or The Lord's Lay, by Mohini Mohun Chatterji; Pub. Ticknor & Co.; From: Theosophical Publishing Society, Madras. Indian Edition—Rs. 3/8/-; American Ed. Rs. 26/4/-; pp. 300.

6. Bhagavadgita 'In English Rhyme', by Bireshvar Chakravarti, Edited by (with Introduction and Notes) J. S. Chakravarti, M. A., F. R. A. S.; From: Kegan Paul Trench Trubnar & Co., London; Ed. I. 1906; Rs. 10/-; pp.200.

7. Bhagavadgita or the Sacred Lay: 'An Edition of the Sanskrit Text in Devanagari Character' by J. Cockburn Thomson; Pub. W. H. Allen & Co., Ed. I-1867; Rs. 10/-; pp. 100.

8. Bhagavadgita (De Carmine Dei Deorum; Vols. 3, with Sanskrit text) By R. S. Taki B. A.; Pub. The Sadbhakti Prasarak Mandali, Saraswati Bag, Andheri, Bombay; Ed. I-1923; Rs. 10/-; pp. 1200.

9. Bhagavadgita by Annie Besant and Bhagavandas (with Devanagari text, free English Translation, word-meaning, and word-index) Pub. T. P. House, Madras; Ed. II-1926; Rs. 3/12/-; pp. 400.

10. Bhagavadgita (With Sans. Text and word-meaning) by Swami Swarupanand. Pub. Adwaita Ashram, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas; From T. P. S., Madras Ed. IV-1926; Rs. 2/8/-; pp. 425.

11. Bhagavadgita: The Philosophy of Action. (Lok. B. G. Tilak's Gita-Rahasya in Marathi) Translated by V. Mangal Vedkar; Pub. B. G. Paul & Co., Madras; Ed. III-1928; Rs. 2/-; pp. 400.

12. Bhagavadgita or The Divine Path to God (Essay) by K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.; Pub. Ganesh & Co., Madras; Ed I-1928; Re. 1/-; pp. 175.

13. Bhagavadgita or The Lord's Song, by Annie Besant; Pub. T. P. H., London; Ed. V.—1918; Rs. 2/10/-; pp. 115.

14. Bhagavadgita: Interpreted by Holden Edward Sampson; Pub. The EK—Klesia Fellowship, Tanners Green, Wythall, Birmingham, England; Ed. II-1923; Re. 1/8/-; pp. 165.

15. The Song Celestial (Poetic) by Sir Edvin Arnold; Pub. Kegan Paul Trench Trubnar & Co., London; From: T. P. S., Madras. Ed. New—1921; Re. 1/10/-; pp. 112.

16. The Bhagavadgita—The Book of Devotion: 'Pocket Edition' by William Q. Judge; Pub. T. S., Pointloma, California, U. S. A.; From: T. P. S. Madras; Ed. II-1922; Rs. 2/4/-; pp. 140.

17. Bhagavadgitā or The Blessed Lord's Song: 'P. Ed.' by Swami Paramananda; Pub. The Vedanta Centre, Boston Mass, U. S. A.; From. T. P. S., Madras. Ed. III-;Rs.3/12/-; pp. 150.

18. Gita Idea of God: By Brahmachari Gitanand; Pub. B. G. Paul and Co., Madras; Ed. I-1930; Rs. 5/-; pp. 504.

19. Bhagavadgita (Sans., Canarese, English and Latin), Containing:—The Sans. Text from Schlegel's edition; the Canarese newly Translated from the Sans.; the English Trans. by Sir Charles Wilkins, with his preface and Notes, Etc.; and the introduction by the Hon. Warren Hastings, with an Appendix containing Additional Notes from Prof. Wilson, Rev. H. Milma., etc.; and an Essay on the Philosophy and Poetry of the Bhagavadgita by Baron William Von Humboldt, translated from the German by Rev. G. H. Weigle; the second edition of Schlegel's Latin Version of the Gita, With the Sanskrit Text revised by Prof. Lassen, etc.; Edited by the Rev. J. Garrett, Bangalore; Ed.-1849; Rs. 13/-;pp. 300.

20. The Bhagavadgita (with Notes) by Charles Wilkins; Pub. East India Company; Printed for C. Nourse, Opposite Catharine Street in the Strand, London; Ed. I-1785; Rs. 20/-;pp. 156.

21. Bhagavadgita or The Song of the Master: By Charles Johnston; Pub. T. S., New York.; Rs. 4/14/-; pp. 200.

22. The Bhagavadgita: The Celestial Song, by R. Narsinh Rao, B.A.,B.L., Print. Sri Vidya Press, Kumbakonam; Ed.-1909.

23. The Bhagavadgita (English Translation) by S. Ramaswami Aiyangar; Print. Coxton Press, Bangalore, Ed.-1910.

24. Bhagavadgita (Latin), Containing:—

    1. Sans. Text in Devanagari Character,
    2. Latin Trans. By Augustus Guilelmus A. Schlegel,
    3. English essay by Rev. R. D. Griffith.

    E.— J. G., Bangalore; Ed.—1848, 'Reprint of the edition published at Bonn. in 1823'; Rs. 4/-; pp-90.

25. Bhagavadgita: 'Critical Annotations and preface and notes in Latin with text in Devanagri Character' by Augustus Guilelmus A. Schlegel and Christian Lassen; Prostat Apud Aduardum Wiber, Bibliopolam, Bonnae; Ed. 1846; Rs. 25/-; pp. 350.

26. Bhagavadgita (French Preface and text in Romon character) E. Dr. St. Fr. Michalski Iwienski.; Pub. Paul Geuthner, Paris; Ed. I-1922; Publication no. 1 of the Asiatic Society of Warsaw, Russia'; Rs. 3/-; pp.50.

27. La Bhagavadgita or Le Chant Du Bienheureux: 'Text in Roman Character; Trans. in French' by M. Emile Burnouf; Pub. Imprimerie Orientale de ve Raybois; Nancy, France; Ed. I—1861; Rs. 2/8; pp. 250.

28. La Bh. G. (French) by A. Kamensky: From: Imprimerie Jent S. A., Rue Necker, 9, 11, Marson Attitree a la Societe Co-operative Impression, Geneva.

39. La Bhagavadgita (French Translation) by Anna Kamensky; Paris; Ed.-1926.

30. Bhagavadgita (French Translation) Uttar Gita by A. Besant and F. C. Terror; Ed.1908.

31. Bhagavadgita (French Translation): 'Chant du Sergreur' by A. Anducd M. Shultz; Ed. 1920; Paris.

32. Bhagavadgita (Italian) by Florence N. D.; Rs. 8/-.

33. Bhagavadgita (German Translation) by Richard Garbe; Pub. H. Haessel, Verlag, Leipzig (Germany); Ed. II. Revised—1921; Rs. 6/-; pp. 175.

34. Vier Philosophische Texte Des Mahabharatam 'Bhagavadgita, Anugita, etc. in German' by Dr. Paul Deussen, Prof. Kiel University; Pub. F. A. Brockhaus, Leipzig; Ed. I—1906; Rs. 20/-; pp. 1030.

35. Bhagavadgita or Des Erhabenen Sang (German) by Leopold von Schroeder; Pub. Eugen Diederichs, Verlag, Jena; Edition I-1922; Rs. 4/-; pp. 100.

36. Die Bhagavadgita or Das Hohe Lied. (German; Poetry) by Franz Hartmann M. D.; Pub. Theosophical Publication, Leipzig; Print. W. Hoppe Borsdorf, Leipzig; Ed. IV—1924; Rs. 5/-; pp. 220.

37. Bhagavadgita or Gesang Des Heiligen (German) by Dr. Paul Deussen; Pub. F. A. Brockhans, Leipzig; Ed. I-1911; Rs. 8/-;pp. 155.

38. Bhagavadgita or Der Gesang Deo Erhabenen (German; Poetry) by Theodor Springmann.; Pub. Adolf Saal, Verlag, Lauenburg (Germany); Print. Hurtung & Co., 25, Hamburg; Ed. I-1921; Rs. 4/-;pp. 115.

39. Bhagavadgita or Herrens Sang (Swedish; Peotry) by Nino Runeberg; Pub. Bajorck & Borjesson, Stockholm (Sweden); Print. A. B. Fahlchantz Press, Stockholm; Ed. I-1922; Rs. 2/8/-; pp. 150.

40. Bhagavadgita or Herrens Sang (Swedish) by Frantz Lexow.; Pub. Teosofisk Samfunds Danske Forlag.; Print. Christian Andersens Bogtrykkeri, Kobenhavn; From: Aktiebolaget C. E. Fritzes, Fredsgatan 2, Stockholm; Ed.—1920; Rs. 3/4/-; pp. 160.

41. Bhagavadgita.—Hangivandets Bok. (Swedish) by William Q. Judge.; Pub. Almqvist & Wickaells Boktryckeri AB., Upsala, Stockholm (Sweden); Ed. III—1918; Rs. 2/8/-; pp. 160.

42. Bhagavadgita (Russian Translation) by Manziarly. T. Kamensky A.; Ed. 1914.

43. Bhagavadgita. (Russian Translation) by A. Kamensky; From: Nsuahie Kyphan Btcthukb Teocoom, Petrograd.

44. The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy (Essay) by Prof. Max Muller, K. M.; Pub. Longman Green and Co., London; Ed. V-1919; Rs. 6/8/-; pp. 510.

45. Bhagavadgita. (Dutch Translation) by Labberton; Pub. T. P. S., Amsterdam; Ed. 1910.

46. Bhagavadgita. (Dutch Translation) by Dr. J.W. Boissevain; Pub. Theosophische Witgeverszaak 'Gnosis' Insulindeweg, 171, Amsterdam; Ed. 1909.

47. La Bhagavadgita. (Spanish Translation) by E. Trimisob; Ed.1908.

48. Bhagavadgita (Spanish Translation) by J. R. Borral.; From: Tip De Carbonell Yesteva-Rambla de Calebena 118 Barcelona; Ed. 1910.

49. Bhagavadgita. (Bohemian Translation) by Dr. F. Hertmann; From: Vaelav Proch azka dapisujici clen Theosophickeho Spalqu V. Praze; Ed.-1900.

50. Bhagavadgita: Azisleniemek (Hungarian Trans.); From: Legrady Nyomda es Konyukiado, R. T. Budapest

51. Bhagavadgita (Japanese Translation by Pof. J. Takakusu; From: The Young East (Bookseller) Y.M.B.A. Buil.; Rs. 2/-;5, Same Chome. Hongo, Tokio; (Japan).

52. Bhagavadgita: Old Sacred Songs of India (Japanese)—(Sacred Books of the World Series—, Part I, Vol. 6, Sekai seiten zenshu); Containing:— 1. Ṛgveda Hymns, 2. Bhagavadgita (Translation By Prof. J. Takakusu): 3. Appendix (Explanation of Gita); Pub. World Literary Works publishing Society; (Sekai Bunkokonko-Kai.) No. 52 Myagatani-machi, Kaishi Kawa Ku, Tokio (Japan); From: The Young East, 5, Sanchome, House, Tokio (Japan); Rs.6/-.

53. Bhagavadgita (Tibetan, with English Translation): By Alexander Csoma De Koros; Ed.1-1834; Rs 20/; pp. 256; Pub. Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.

54. Ka. Bhagavadgita: By Shivcharan Roy; Print. Khasi Press, Mawkhal, Shillong; Ed. I—1903; Re.-/8/-;pp. 200.

55 Bhagavadgita (Translation) by F. T. Brooks; Pub. Shyambehari Mishra, Ajmer; Printed by S. M. Industrial Co., Ltd., Ajmer.

56. Great Epic of India by E. Washburn Hopkins, Ph. D., LL. D., Yale University, New Hoven (Essay); 1920; Rs. 25/-; pp. 485.

57. Bhagavadgita, Text with English Translation: By Charles Wilkins; III. edition; Pub. Upendralaldas, Calcutta, Ed. III.—1896; Re. 1/4/-; pp. 135.

A Peep into the Illustrations.

Arjuna on the battle-field—

This picture shows the two armies arrayed on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra in front of each other, ready to fight. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Divine charioteer, has placed the chariot of Arjuna between the two forces, as instructed by him, and Arjuna is seen drooping in a fit of faint-heartedness at the sight of his dear and near ones whom he is called upon to slay in battle. Śrī Bhagavān is checking the spirited and restive steeds by holding the rein in one hand and, turning towards Arjuna, is asking him to shake off his faint-heartedness and gird himself for battle.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna—

No picture, however complete, can give even the faintest idea of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's ineffable Beauty. The dark curly wavy hair, on which shines the beautiful peacock diadem, the big lotus-eyes, the thick brow with a broad forehead, sweet smiles and, above all, the bewitching look have a magic of their own. The flute has a history behind it. Not to speak of Gopīs—the cowherd maids of Braj—abirds, beasts, rivers, nay, even the trees and mountains were moved to ecstatic dance when the Eternal Singer placed the flute on His lips. All-Beauty, All-joy, All-love, Kṛṣṇa stands even to-day on the bank of the Yamunā, half reclined on the Kadamba tree with the flute in His hand, but where are the Gopīs, where is Rādhā to move Him to sing? Thus He stands in keen expectancy for a true lover who is really eager to see Him, to love Him, to embrace Him and finally emerge in Him.

Maharshi Vyasa—

Maharṣi Vedavyāsa, the reputed author of the *Mahābhārata*, the *Vedānta Sūtras* and the eighteen Purāṇas, is believed to be an incarnation of God. He is so called because he is credited with the work of having classified and arranged the Vedas in their extant form—"विव्यास वेदान् यस्मात् स तस्माद्व्यास इति स्मृतः". He possessed a knowledge of the past, present and future and is stated to have witnessed by his transcendental vision (दिव्य दृष्टि) even from his hermitage what happened at the battle-field of Kurukṣetra during the Mahābhārata War and chronicled the same in the Great Epic, along with the Divine message of Bhagavad-gītā. He is seen here busy at his encyclopædic work.

Sanjaya and Dhritarashtra—

This picture shows the blind king Dhṛtarāṣtra asking his minister and confidant Sañjaya at Hastināpur what happened of the belligerent forces at the battle-field of Kurukṣetra. Maharṣi Vedavyāsa had granted the boon of transcendental vision (दिव्य दृष्टि) to Sañjaya, who was a great devotee of Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa, at the request of King Dhṛtarāṣṭra who was naturally anxious to remain *au fait* with the happenings of the war. Dhṛtarāṣṭra did not care to avail himself of the boon granted for his sake to Sañjaya, in the first instance, as he did not want to hear of the destruction of his own dear and near ones. On his

being apprised of the fall of Bhīṣma, however, his curiosity got the better of his nervousness and he requested Sañjaya to report to him what had happened on battle-field there from the very beginning. Sañjaya is seen describing to his master what he actually saw of the battle by clairvoyance.

Jagadguru Sri Krishna—

Bhagavān Sri Kṛṣṇa is shown here with what is known as *Jñāna-Mudra*, which is symbolical of His mission of a World-Teacher and signifies His solicitude for the welfare of the whole universe. He has raised one of his hands for the protection of all those who seek refuge in Him. The unruffled serenity of His countenance is particularly significant.

Warrior Sri Krishna—

Sri Bhagavān is seen here in the garb of a hero, clad in breast-plate and armour and armed with a bow, a shield, a quiver, a mace and a lance, as if ready to start on a mission of quelling his foes and destroying the evil-doers, which is one of the avowed purposes of His incarnation. He is depicted here full of agility and stern determination.

"All can come to Me."—

The benign Lord is seen here accepting the offerings of all, including a Brahman, a Kṣatriya, a Vaiśya, a Śūdra, a woman and a Chāṇḍāla, made in their respective ways. It beautifully illustrates the following memorable utterance of Sri Bhagavān in the *Bhagavadgītā*:—

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥
किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।

(IX. 32-33)

"Even womanfolk, Vaiśyas and Śūdras (those belonging to the mercantile and labouring classes), nay even those of ignoble birth, who take refuge with Me, O Pārtha, they also reach the highest goal. How much easier it is for the holy Brahmans (those belonging to the priestly class) and devout Kṣatriyas (those belonging to the warrior class) who thus surrender themselves to Me."

At the Parting of Ways—

This picture shows the vast expanse of the ocean of *Saṃsāra* (birth and death) with its turbulent waves tossing over one another. Those who have clung to woman and wealth are seen being swallowed by the waves, whereas the devotee who has his eyes turned towards God is being lifted out of the ocean by Sri Bhagavān Himself.

The "Kalyana-Kalpataru"

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We are glad to announce that the "Kalyana-Kalpataru" has completed one year. During this short space of time it has made itself known throughout the length and breadth of India as well as in foreign countries and has been appreciated and admired by scholars and those interested in spiritual literature all over the world. The "Kalyana-Kalpataru" treats of religion in the broadest acceptance of the term and has consequently been patronized by the followers of all religions.

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The inaugural Special Number for the last year was a volume consisting of over 300 pages and over 40 illustrations, about a dozen of which are tri-coloured. It contains about a hundred articles on the various aspects of God by eminent Indian saints and scholars of world-wide repute, including Acharyas and religious heads, Vice-chancellors of Universities and Principals and Professors of Colleges, the names of some of whom are given below:—

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In the literature of the whole world there is no book like Gita. Gita is the most luminous and priceless gem of all our books. It gives peace to the afflicted souls, it makes us masters of spiritual wisdom. In short, in all the languages of the world there is not a single book like Gita which can acquaint us so exquisitely with the hidden truths of all the ages.

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Those who are keen about knowing the fundamentals of Hindu religion and polity must make it a point to go through this unsurpassed and wonderful book, because it clearly expounds the cardinal principles of Hindu religion. When our Scriptures had finally thought over the problems of the perishable and imperishable aspects of the world, and of the Field (क्षेत्र) and Knower (क्षेत्रज्ञ) through the philosophy of Yoga, Samkhya, Nyaya, Mimansa, Upanishad and Vedant, Gita made a clear improvement in enunciating a philosophy of *Karma* based on *Jnana* and supported by *Bhakti*. Hence it can be said that even in Sanskrit literature there is not a single book which deals with all the principles and truths of Hindu Dharma in such a short yet exhaustive and inapproachable manner.

—*Lokmanya Tilak.*